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ABSTRACT

This leader guide is designed to assist employability skills trainers in helping their students or clients find jobs. Discussed first are the goals and objectives of employability skills training. Next, guidelines are provided for designing employability skills training programs. Skills needed by employability skills trainers are discussed. Suggestions are set forth for adapting the guide for various special populations. Provided next is a list of competencies needed by job seekers. Procedures for publicizing an employability skills training program are outlined. The guide includes instructor information for the accompanying student guide, which consists of units addressing the following topics: first steps in looking for a job, procedures for planning a job campaign, decision making, techniques for communication with employers (job applications, resumes, cover letters), job interviews, and steps in keeping and advancing in a job. For each unit, instructors are given goals, background information, suggested activities, and closure activities. (MN)

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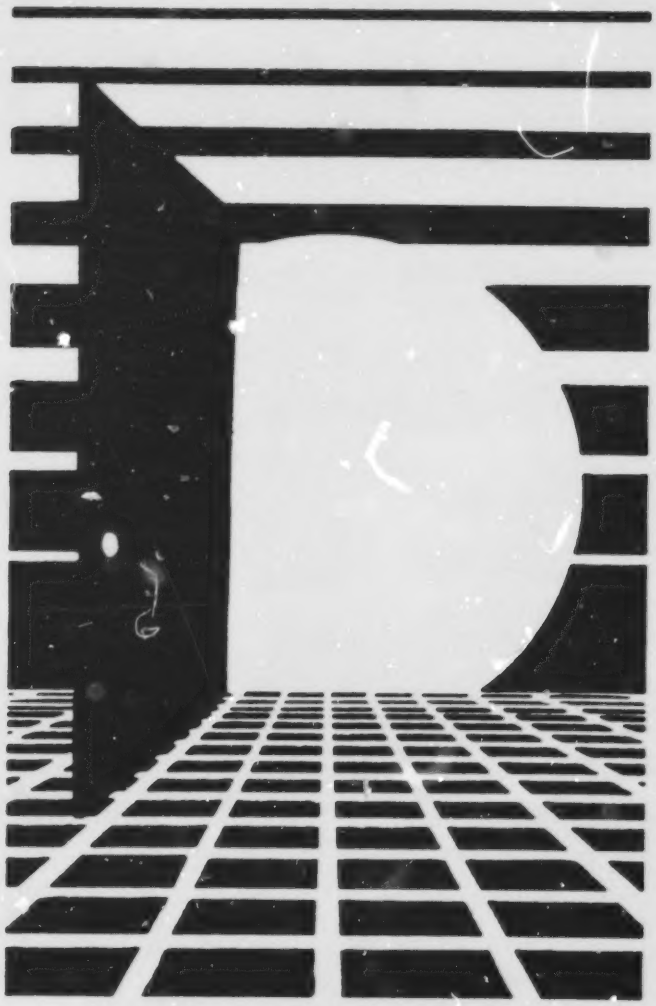
LEADER GUIDE

Opening Doors

A PRACTICAL GUIDE FOR JOB HUNTING



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WHY EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS TRAINING?

There is no "magic" in the job hunt process although many people wish there were - that somehow "the right job" will appear and they won't have to go through the many tasks that can be at the same time exciting and depressing, exhilarating and disappointing, and a lot of hard work. Realistically, however, job hunting skills are learnable and are the tools people must use to find and secure a job. Often the job doesn't go to the most experienced or most skilled worker but to the person who can locate employers, knows his or her skills, strengths, abilities, and limitations, can communicate in written form to employers, and who interviews well.

Also there are many things job hunters and we as employability skills trainers can't control - the ups and downs of the economy, the number of job openings in a region or occupation, and the shift toward more technical job content. What we and they can do is develop job hunting skills so that the job hunter can effectively compete for available openings and can present him/herself positively to employers.

This leader guide is designed to help you help your students or clients to do just that.

HOW TO DESIGN AN EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS TRAINING

Selecting

The first step in planning your own program, using Opening Doors, is to choose which materials to use. Few participants need every activity in the guide. There are several ways to make this decision. The materials in the guide are designed to follow the sequence, and cover each of the abilities outlined in the Competency List which follows these introductory materials. Each activity in the participant guide has a corresponding leader guide section. It is important for participants to be able to do each of these things, but they may already know many of them.

We suggest that you use this competency list to determine the needs of your participants. With individuals you may wish to conduct a general discussion to get a "feel" for what they already know and/or need to know. With groups you may wish to pursue a similar route, meeting with each member individually. The competency list itself may also be adapted and reproduced as a check list and distributed to members, allowing them to decide on their own competencies and needs. The advantages of this kind of assessment are that you can provide individualized programming. The disadvantage is that it may not be possible to provide individualized programming.

An alternative is to use the competency list yourself as trainer to decide what to include in your programs. You will want to consider the needs and life circumstances of your clientele. For example, will they need more ego -

builders like "strengths" or more practice with interviewing? You will want to consider how much time you have available, and whether or not your participants can do out of class work. Another factor in the selection process is regional differences. Small towns and large cities, rural and urban areas often have different resources and employer preferences. You may need to adapt these materials for your region. Some other considerations in selecting activities are discussed below.

SEQUENCING

Neither the participants nor the leader guide is intended to be used in sequence from start to finish. In addition to assessing which competencies your participants need to learn, it is necessary to look at the overall "flow" of the training.

It should fit together logically. When you look at your training agenda, make sure the necessary preparation pieces come before a main activity. For example, it is important to have participants do some self-assessment and gathering of data about past experience before they attempt to do the section on job applications, write a resume and practice interviewing.

It should fit the needs of the group or individual. You will need to adapt your training agenda to the special needs of your participants. For example, you may have a group who are so focused on their liabilities at the beginning of the training that the section on liabilities must come first so that they can then move on and learn other skills. Alternatively, they may be too defensive or scared to look at liabilities until much later in the training.

Group development and the building of trust between participant and trainer and between participants should be a consideration. When planning the flow of your training consider including activities which will build trust at the beginning before you attempt other activities which might include a deeper level of disclosure. One of the reasons Emotional Reactions to Job Loss is not at the very beginning of the training is because people need to be comfortable with the trainer and other participants to talk about their feelings.

BUILDING IN VARIETY

Create a balance between experiential and informational material. In each part of the leader guide we have included background information, suggested activities and a closure. We have found that people learn best by experiencing as well as hearing or reading straight information. Therfore, it is important to include in your training high energy-producing activities and alternate those with lower energy lecturettes.

Vary the type of activities. As you look over the flow of your training, make sure there is a variety of activities. People working in small groups, contributing to a large group brainstorming activity, then doing a checklist is more interesting than three brainstorming activities in a row.

SKILLS TRAINERS NEED

There are a variety of people who are doing employability skills training - counselors, teachers, instructors, placement specialists and others. To be effective as a trainer, it is best if you have or can develop the following skills and knowledge:

Counseling:
Includes the ability to listen to people from varied backgrounds, experiences, and levels of development with an open mind and accepting attitude. It is necessary to have skills in active listening, asking clarifying questions, and tracking the progress and themes of the group and individuals. It also includes some knowledge of career development, youth and adult development, plus decision-making and planning strategies.

Group Dynamics: (If your training is in a group setting)
Includes the ability to promote group interaction and support, to develop a sense of trust within the group, to be aware of group process (what's happening) as well as content (what is being said). It also includes some theoretical knowledge of group dynamics and group development.

Training/Teaching:
Includes the ability to present information clearly and concisely, to give appropriate examples to highlight major points, and to discuss reactions to an activity to maximize participants' learning. It also includes the ability to implement a training design, to tailor it to participant needs, to evaluate its effectiveness and modify as necessary.

Feedback:
Includes the ability to point out specific behaviors, to emphasize positive behaviors, and to reward improvements. This is particularly important in the "practice" parts of the training. There are examples of how to give specific behavioral feedback in the interview section of the guide.

Assessment/Test Interpretation:
Includes the ability to evaluate available tests, select those that will be most useful for your population, and interpret the results. When interpreting the results, it is important to be able to convey the test's strengths and limitations as well as help participants keep test results in perspective - neither giving more nor less weight in influencing their decisions than is appropriate.

Referral/Knowledge of Community Recources
Includes the ability to assess the special needs of individuals within a training group and, if necessary, to refer those people to other professionals or other programs. This requires 1) the ability to recognize the limitations of one's program and professional capabilities and 2) to develop a knowledge of other competent professionals and specialized services within one's community.

If you find that you need to develop or improve some of the above skills, here are some suggestions of how you might do that:

On the Job: A supervisor or more experienced trainer in your work setting may be able to teach you some additional skills - either directly or by working as your co-trainer.

Reading: The bibliographies in both the participant and leader guides of Opening Doors list resources that are representative of the wealth of writing that is available concerning information and training skills in the employability area. You can use these lists to begin to expand your knowledge.

Classes/ Trainings: There are classes you can take at nearby universities or community colleges in subject areas that include training, counseling, and group skills. Your school or agency can also hire outside consultants on a contractual basis to provide specialized training to you and others in your work setting.

Community/ Professional Resources: Your local intermediate school district may have consultants available to you. Professional organizations to which you or your colleagues belong may provide conferences and workshops in specific subject areas.

HOW TO ADAPT GUIDE FOR SPECIAL POPULATIONS

Individuals

All of the activities in the Leader Guide are written for groups. They are, however, adaptable for individuals. It would probably be more appropriate to have the written parts done outside of the counseling session, unless your client needs a great deal of supervision. It may be necessary to simulate the group interaction, with you as role player, suggestion giver, etc. It is also particularly important with individuals to encourage them to get outside information, resources, and support. As with groups, the time frame you employ can influence the outcomes of the program. Clients need time to complete assignments and gather information, but need frequent enough appointments to keep their momentum going. The length of time optimum for this will clearly vary from client to client. One of the functions of a group, which you will have to simulate, is the social pressure to continue the job search activities, some of which are more easily postponed. It is important to have assignments between sessions which are then checked on at the next meeting.

Youth Entering the Job Market for the First Time

Our experience in training young people has been that it is important to focus primarily on their main concerns - locating employers, filling out job applications and interviewing. Our experience has been that students realize the importance of self assessment better when it is tied to practice in interviewing techniques. It is then that students understand that lack of information about themselves is a drawback. They may then be ready to look at such topics as skills and strengths. This population will be more involved in activities when they can experience how they are directly linked to their main areas of concern.

Secondly, while adults can and often do sit through a week or more of half or full day training sessions, we've found that young people - do better to have an hour or two of employability skills training at a time, spaced over several weeks or even a semester. Teachers, Instructors, Counselors Employability Skills curriculum guides are available to you from your vocational director or school administrator.

Limited English Proficiency/Non-literate Participants

Clearly, the guide is designed to be read. Most of the activities are adaptable to an oral presentation, however. It would be important to help people find a way to keep records of their skills and abilities; information gathered; job search activities; and their future plans. Particular attention will have to be paid to helping your participants write resumes and develop a

plan for filling out applications and presenting themselves at interviews. It will also be important to help people understand that their limits in this area are indeed a liability which they will need to plan around. (Page 14 of Opening Doors) If your participants are also new to the United States or your geographical area, they will need additional help in locating resources, employers, and sources of information. You may wish to add this data to your program.

Community College Students

Opening Doors is designed to be comfortably used in a classroom setting. Additional activities may need to be added to fit the academic requirements of a particular institution. Students might be asked, for example, to keep a log of their activities, write up their job information interview and/or present it orally to the class, hand in their resume and sample cover letters, etc. It can also be used in non-class groups or individually by making the adaptations suggested in other areas of this section. Community college students are often in a position to take advantage of part time work or internship possibilities which could enhance their career decision making or job search. They should be encouraged to take full advantage of these opportunities.

Displaced Workers

Some displaced workers have lost their jobs because of a reduction in force (RIF). Others have been fired for cause; still others are victims of plant closings. All may have anger at the "system" which landed them in this fix. One of the major jobs of leaders with this group is to help them express that anger and then move beyond it to action. (See section on Emotional Reactions to Job Loss.) In addition, many workers have never looked for work in the way we mean it today. All of these skills may be new, and yet they may expect themselves to already know them. Teaching the process is crucial here - many of these people will have to look for work several times in their lives.

One of the difficult areas in working with displaced workers concerns the decision of whether or not to change careers or fields of work. Many participants wish to remain in their chosen area when this is no longer a realistic option. (Similarly, you may need to confront an unrealistic expectation for a call back from a lay-off.) In addition, displaced workers often need referrals to governmental assistance, as well as to survival resources such as emergency food and medical care.

The Underemployed

People who are working part time when they wish to work full time, or people working at a lower level than their training and experience qualifies them for

are often interested in employability skills training. Working provides people with access to a larger network, as well as putting them in a position of "strength" as they look for work. It also makes it difficult to find the time to search properly, respond to phone calls, and go on interviews. It can be an awkward position. Helping participants see the short term/long term goal connection (page 30 in Opening Doors) can be helpful for this group. Helping them gather more information about the job market is also important - they may be in their current jobs because they are not fully aware of the possible options.

Women Entering or Reentering the Job Market

This group includes displaced homemakers as well as other women who for financial or personal reasons decide to look for work. Many women in these groups have a very unrealistic idea of their capabilities. From the too low, "I can't do anything", to the too high, "I've run my home, I could run your company", these expectations need a dose of reality. Information about the world of work is crucial to this group, as are activities in the self assessment section on skills, strengths, etc. Particular attention must be paid in the resume writing and job interviewing sections on how to deal with gaps in work history, age (see section on older workers below) and marital status. Returning women, like displaced workers, are often looking for guarantees in choosing further schooling. "I spent four years becoming an elementary school teacher, I don't want to repeat that mistake." Helping participants understand the nature of our current world of work with its rapid changes is crucial to effective work with this group.

Adults Entering the Job Market for the First Time

People in this category have a unique combination of potential liabilities as job hunters. First, they have no work history - an unusual circumstance for most adults and one which employers look at with skepticism. Secondly, they lack first-hand, realistic knowledge of the job market and have no experience dealing with employer expectations regarding job performance.

Consequently, in training this population, the trainer will want to emphasize the following: 1) confidence and ego building activities - including responding to participants with respect and reinforcing any positive steps they take - no matter how small; 2) ways of dealing with their lack of work history when communicating with employers and interviewing; 3) job retention - how to meet employer expectations and keep the job; and 4) ways participants can get first-hand, realistic knowledge of the job market (e.g. through information interviews, day-on-the job, written resources, using employers as speakers in your program, or subsidized employment.)

It is also important for the trainer to help participants realistically make decisions about short and long term goals, i.e., is it practical and possible to make short term sacrifices to reach a long term goal? Are there other routes to reaching that goal?

Older Workers

Legally, an older worker is anyone over 40. You may have people in your programs over 40 or over 60 - if they perceive themselves or are perceived as older workers, the same issues exist. Employers often do hold prejudices about older workers. Although there are legal protections, they are difficult to invoke. Employers may view older persons as having diminished physical and intellectual capabilities, health problems, and difficulty relating to younger co-workers or supervisors. They may also be concerned about health insurance rates or pension plan expenses. The older person therefore needs to take an active role in countering these stereotypes or problems. Attitude can be crucial. If participants see themselves as unmarketable because of age, they will be. If they can express to employers the advantages they have as a result of life experience and maturity, they will be more successful in their job search. Some programmatic implications of this are to help your participants identify the advantages of age and experience; help them think of ways to combat the stereotypes in cover letters and in interviews; help them assess their occupational goals realistically. It might be a good idea to have older workers who have found work come in to speak to your program to serve as role models as well as to provide information about their successful searches and what made them successful. For more information, you may want to contact the Area Agencies on Aging Association of Michigan. (Plaza Center, 111 S. Capital Avenue, Lansing, MI 48902, 517-482-2871.) They publish a newsletter entitled, Working Into the 80's.

COMPETENCIES NEEDED BY JOB SEEKERS

A. SELF AWARENESS/ASSESSMENT

Participants will:

1. Understand the psychological impact of looking for work
2. Identify and list accomplishments and achievements
3. Identify and list their technical skills
4. Identify and list their transferable skills
5. Realistically assess their strengths
6. Realistically identify weaknesses, develop strategies to correct them and minimize their effect on the job campaign
7. Realistically assess liabilities, identify those that can be overcome, and develop an action plan for doing so
8. Specify values and prioritize them
9. Define interests
10. Know techniques for reducing stress related to the job hunt
11. Combine self-assessment information and match to potential job target

B. DECISION-MAKING

Participants will:

1. Identify individual realities and practicalities
2. Be able to set long/short term goals
3. Know appropriate decision-making strategies for job search process
4. Assess relocation, self-employment, civil service, and military service as alternatives

C. PLANNING JOB CAMPAIGN

Participants will:

1. Be able to demonstrate knowledge of the sequential nature of the job hunt process

2. Know sources of occupational/educational information
3. Know how to establish, expand and utilize an information and support network
4. Be able to locate employers who hire in their occupational area(s)
5. Be able to identify job openings or potential openings
6. Be able to conduct an information interview
7. Have knowledge of information relevant to their identified areas(s) of work
8. Define alternative ways of gaining needed experience and training and know non-formal aspects of the job search
9. Set-up and maintain a record-keeping system

D. COMMUNICATION

1. Oral

   Participants will:

   a. Be competent in assertive communication techniques as applied to the job search process
   b. Be able to gather information and market themselves over the telephone

2. Written

   Participants will:

   a. Compile a personal data inventory including previous work experience, educational/training history, military and community service activities
   b. Be able to complete a job application correctly
   c. Know how to write an effective resume
   d. Know how to write an effective business letter including cover and follow-up letters

E. INTERVIEW SKILLS

Participants will:

1. Know what to expect from a job interview
2. Be able to translate self-assessment into an interview presentation
3. Be able to state clearly occupational goals
4. Know how to rehearse answers to both typical and problematic interview questions
5. Know legal rights in interview situation
6. Be able to demonstrate knowledge of organization and job responsibilities and ask relevant questions
7. Know how to dress appropriately
8. Be able to implement effective non-verbal behavior
9. Know how to develop an interview plan and apply in actual interview
10. Know appropriate time to ask questions regarding pay and fringe benefits
11. Be able to utilize appropriate closing and follow-up techniques

F. JOB RETENTION

Participants will:

1. Learn how to assess the expectations of the work environment
2. Be able to ask for on-going evaluation
3. Be able to ask questions to enhance knowledge of job and organization
4. Know employer's expectations regarding punctuality, reliability, quality, and quantity of work
5. Be able to realistically self-evaluate and point out achievements at performance evaluation
6. Know how to gather information and make decisions regarding occupational future

PUBLICIZING YOUR PROGRAMS

Your employability skills training program may be wonderful: carefully planned, thoroughly researched, packed with useful information, stimulating exercises, and entertaining anecdotes, faithfully rehearsed, and altogether ideal. But if no one knows about it, if the news doesn't get out, if no one feels motivated to come to it, it is useless. Publicizing your program and making it visible and accessible to your community is essential. Here are a few beginning tips to increase your chances of drawing capacity crowds.

GETTING CLEAR: Before you do anything else:

+Describe your program in one sentence. No jargon. Describe its benefits. Why should a person come to your program? How will it help them?

+Describe your target audience. Who are the people you want to reach? Displaced homemakers, unemployed young people, low-income adults? Where are they? Who are they talking to? Listening to? What do they read? Do they read at all? Become completely familiar with your community and your target audience before you begin your publicity efforts.

+Decide which one person will be responsible for overseeing the publicity of your program. Having one person handle all calls from the press or others seeking information can save a lot of confusion and build credibility.

CHOOSING A STRATEGY: After you've described your program and who you want to use it, decide which are the best ways to reach those specific people.

+Remember word-of-mouth is still the most powerful outreach tool you have. Are there people out there who already know you? Can you acquaint them with your new program so that they will tell prospective clients about you? Who else would tell others about your program? Remind your staff that wherever they are, whoever they talk to formally or informally, they are part of the publicity for your program. Use all your networking skills. Find out who else is in regular contact with your target population. Is another agency or group providing programs similar to yours? Find out how the people in your target population get their information and then try to get on the word-of-mouth grapevine. One idea is to hire members of your target audience as parttime outreach workers. Simply spending time with members of your target group, talking in an informal setting can help develop your credibility and get the word out about what you have to offer.

PRINTED MATERIAL: No matter who your audience is, some form of printed material will probably be appropriate. Copies of standard press releases which can be sent to daily, weekly, and neighborhood newspapers, shoppers' guides, union or in-house newsletters, follow. Be sure all necessary information is contained in the first paragraph of your release. If you can fit it into the first sentence, all the better. Many communities publish a

media directory which lists pertinent information about all media including print, radio and television. (In Detroit it's called the Finder Binder.) Such a directory, usually available in libraries, can help you direct your press releases to a specific editor or writer at a paper or station. Sending information addressed to one or more particular persons at a paper greatly increases the chances of its getting published. Familiarize yourself with your community's papers. Try making direct contact with an editor, reporter, or columnist who you think would have a special interest in your program. Send a press release, then follow-up with a phone call and a suggestion for a feature story on one of your "graduates" telling how your program helped in a very personal way. Find out the deadlines for each paper you send to, so that press releases arrive in plenty of time. Usually two to three weeks before an event occurs is sufficient.

OTHER APPROACHES: Again, it is extremely important to know your audience. Don't expend your efforts on traditional printed media if the people you want to reach don't read it. Are the people in your target audience more likely to watch the 6:00 o'clock news or pick up a shoppers g[illegible] Do they listen to the radio more than they read or watch TV? Do they [illegible]lletin boards? Where do they shop? Do they go to church? You may w[illegible]t to try inserts in Sunday church bulletins.

Also included here are sample public service announcements (P.S.A.'s) which can be used by radio and television stations. Stations vary widely in their requirements for P.S.A.'s. It's best to call the public service director of your local stations to ask in what format they would like to receive information. Some stations will not use a P.S.A. unless it's already on a cassette tape. Others use only printed messages which they read over the air. Some stations may be willing to produce P.S.A.'s for you. Keep your eyes open for any kind of public relations or publicity seminars for your publicity person to attend. Some newspapers and broadcasters sponsor free seminars for community leaders to learn more about using the media to their best advantage.

BUILD ON SUCCESS: Evaluate what works.

+Find out from the people who come to your programs how they came to be there. Where did they hear about you? What made them want to come? With this information you can look back and evaluate your publicity strategy and change and sharpen it accordingly.

SAMPLE

News Release

Contact person: Judy Jacobs

555-2416

JOB HUNTING COURSE OFFERED

Franklin County Vocational Education Center is offering a program to teach practical job hunting skills beginning Tuesday evening September 24, 1984, at 7:00 p.m. with registration and free orientation at the Center, located at Jackson and Main in downtown Circleville. "How To Get The Job You Want", a course of basic and up-to-date information for job seekers at all levels, will be offered Tuesday evenings from 7:00 to 9:00 p.m. for six weeks. Fee for the course is $25 and scholarships are available.

Janet Cox, career counselor at the Vocational Education Center, will lead the course. Ms. Cox explains, "Most people never get any real training in how to find a job. We learn by trial and error or we don't learn at all. It's only recently we've begun to organize and teach the techniques that successful job hunters have learned over the years. Some", says Cox, "are so simple. Like finding the right words to give yourself credit for what you've accomplished. You'd think we'd know things like that. But we don't. We all tend to minimize what we've done. There's a lot we can all learn about selling ourselves in the job market."

For more information about "How To Get The Job You Want" and for registration, contact Judy Jacobs at 555-2416, during business hours, weekdays.

SAMPLE

Public Service Announcements

For Use Until September 25, 1984

Contact: Judy Jacobs

555-2416

10-second announcement

A COURSE IN HOW TO GET THE JOB YOU WANT BEGINS TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 24, AT FRANKLIN COUNTY VOCATIONAL EDUCATION CENTER. FOR MORE INFORMATION CALL JUDY JACOBS AT 555-2416.

30-second announcement

A COURSE IN HOW TO GET THE JOB YOU WANT BEGINS TUESDAY EVENING, SEPTEMBER 24, AT FRANKLIN COUNTY VOCATIONAL EDUCATION CENTER, MAIN AND JACKSON STREETS, IN DOWNTOWN CIRCLEVILLE. SIX WEEKS OF PRACTICAL INFORMATION AND USEFUL TIPS ON SUCCESSFUL JOB HUNTING. LEARN TO MAXIMIZE YOUR SKILLS AND STRENGTHS. HOW TO WRITE A RESUME. WHAT TO WEAR. HOW TO MAKE THE MOST OF AN INTERVIEW. FOR MORE INFORMATION CALL JUDY AT 555-2416.

FLYER SAMPLES

HOW TO GET THE JOB YOU WANT

6-week course begins
Tuesday Sept 24, 1984
7-9 p.m.
Franklin County Vocational Ed. Center
Jackson & Main Sts.
Downtown
Circleville

Call 555-2416

Hand Lettered

HOW TO GET THE JOB YOU WANT

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FRANKLIN COUNTY VOCATIONAL ED. CENTER
[illegible]

CALL 555-2416

Combination Hand Lettered and Typed

OAKLAND UNIVERSITY
CONTINUUM CENTER

377-3033

ONE DAY "HOW TO" WORKSHOPS

SECRETARIES

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STRESS

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Michigan Law

PROHIBITS
DISCRIMINATION
IN EMPLOYMENT,
EDUCATION, HOUSING,
PUBLIC ACCOMMODATION,
PUBLIC SERVICE OR
LAW ENFORCEMENT

BASED ON RELIGION, RACE,
COLOR, NATIONAL ORIGIN,
AGE, SEX OR HANDICAP

PERSONS GENERALLY EQUAL OR UNEQUAL BASED ON THESE CONDITIONS MAY BE A CRIME AND WITHIN THE

MICHIGAN CIVIL RIGHTS COMMISSION
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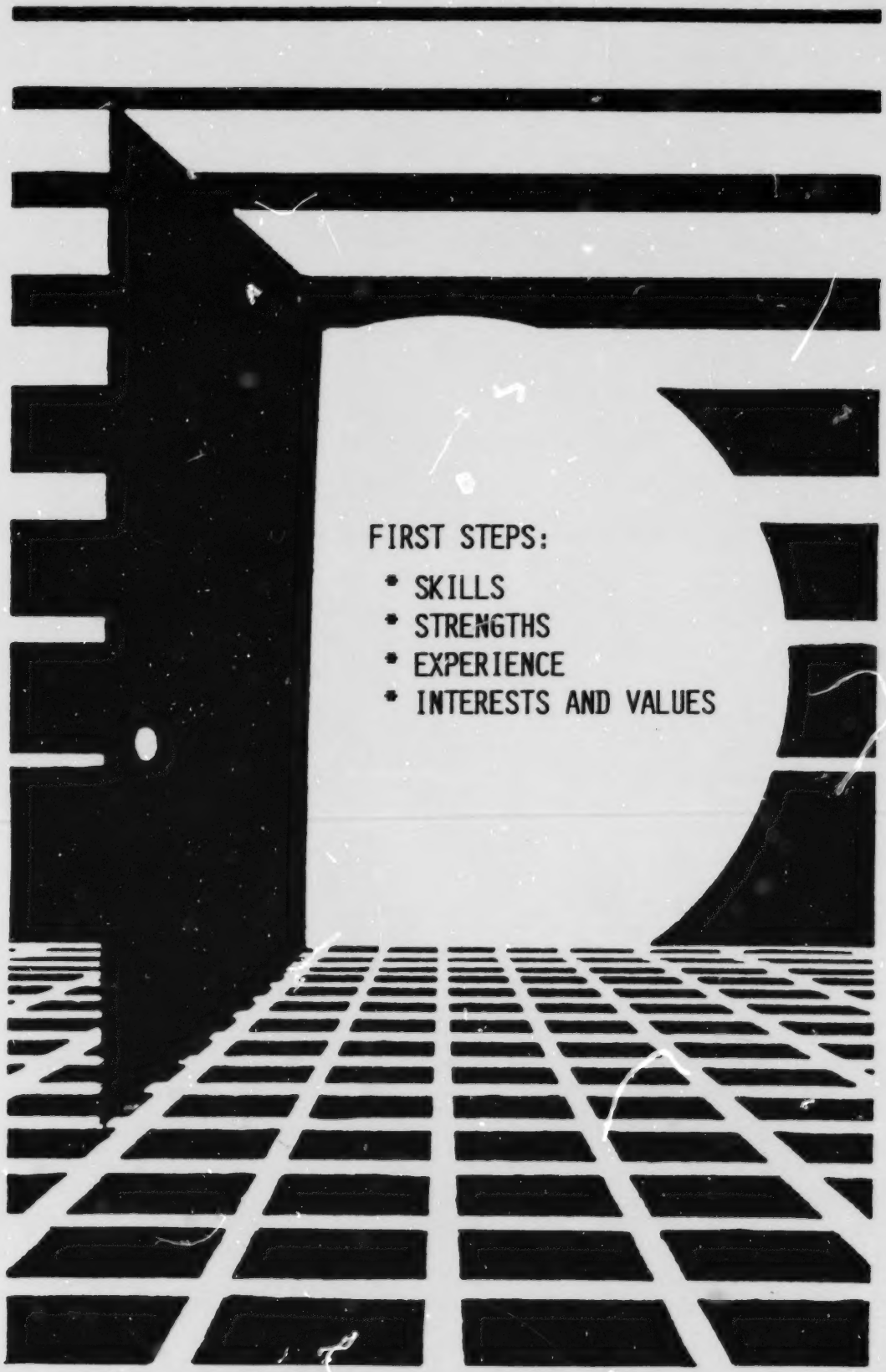

FIRST STEPS:
* SKILLS
* STRENGTHS
* EXPERIENCE
* INTERESTS AND VALUES

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Guide reference: page 9 Competency A 2

GOAL: To identify and list accomplishments/achievements, to understand their use in self-marketing, to begin to build a sense of confidence and self-esteem.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Introduce concept of accomplishments by defining it as anything (big or small) that a person is proud of or has a sense of satisfaction about. It can be as simple as passing a test, fixing a door or as complex as designing and planting a garden, raising six children or getting a promotion. People tend to overlook accomplishments that aren't very difficult to achieve or that don't receive public notice. It is important when presenting this concept to help people identify the "everyday" accomplishments as well as the "unusual" ones. This is best done by the trainer giving his/her own list, taking care to have a balance between big and little and enough variety so that participants can relate to at least one. Be careful not to overwhelm participants with too many achievements.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES:

1. Define accomplishments using general background information above.

2. Give examples from your own background as suggested above.

3. Ask for a volunteer and help that person develop his/her list while rest of group watches process.

4. Then have participants develop their own lists (de-emphasize length - can be two or ten) either alone or in pairs or trios. Then circulate to answer questions or help with problems.

5. Have each person in group stand up and state one accomplishment to others. (Each person's contribution should be responded to with respect to set model for group.) Rationale for this can be given as a practice in presenting one's skills and accomplishments to an employer.

6. Discuss Reactions: Sample questions can be: "What was it like to identify accomplishments? How did you feel telling the rest of the group? How might you use this in job hunt situation?"

CLOSURE:

Give examples of how accomplishments can be tied in with writing the accomplishments resume format. Also show how specific accomplishments can be used in response to interview questions. Tie in with skills identification process which follows.

IDENTIFYING YOUR SKILLS

Guide reference: pages 10-11 Competency A 3, A 4

GOAL: To identify and list skills and determine which ones may be transferable to future job requirements.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Specifically identifying skills and skill areas is important to job hunters because people generally tend to think of themselves as a job title rather than a collection of abilities. They say, "I am a welder, a teacher, a machinist, a secretary or a clerk" and think that if they can't find a new job that has the same title as their last one, they are unemployable. Sometimes employers have the same limited thinking. Therefore, to be a competitive job hunter, it is the task of the job seeker to "educate" the prospective employer about his/her abilities. The process of identifying many skills also can be a confidence-booster for the job seeker.

A second concept to emphasize is that people develop marketable skills outside of the work place. An example of the value of leisure activities is the person who was hired for a supervisory job in a plant in which making quick decisions was a requirement. That person in leisure hours had been a referee for amateur basketball. This is also an example of how skills can be transferred from one environment into another.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES:

In order to have participants understand this concept clearly, it is necessary to present it in a one-step-at-a-time way. After introducing the concept:

1. Illustrate the process by doing an example of your own - picking an accomplishment, job, or activity, listing the tasks and responsibilities and then the corresponding skills developed in accomplishing the tasks. (use chalkboard or newsprint)

2. Ask for a volunteer from the group to pick an activity and help the participant go through the above process, asking the group to help in identifying tasks and skills. (The activity picked can be anything - we have done skills identification on mowing the lawn and winning a card game.)

NOTE: It may be helpful at this point to distinguish between the task, the skill and the corresponding strength - a concept which follows in the guide.

Task - Taking care of children
Skill - Paying attention to more than one person/activity at a time
Strength - Patience

3. In order to then identify "portable skills" (those skills that are easily transferred from one job to another) using the volunteer's example, depending on the kind of group, do one or more of the following:

   a. Have volunteer identify an alternate occupation he/she is considering, and trainer circles those skills that will apply to new situation.
   b. Select a hypothetical new job and circle the skills that fit.
   c. Have group look at skills and you and/or group identify potential jobs that require some of the listed skills.

4. Have participants work in twos or threes and each do one example with the help of the other(s). Circulate to offer help when needed. If there are additional staff available, have two or three participants work with a trained person to help them identify skills.

5. Optional Activities - You may choose to do one or both of the following:

   a. Use some of the available tests, inventories, or questionnaires that focus on skills to help participants with this identification.

   b. Gain access to M.O.D.A.S. (Michigan Occupational Data Analysis System). Available October 1, 1984 through the Michigan Career Education and Vocational Education Resource Center, Michigan State University 1-800-292-1606. One of the many functions of this computer system is to take information about former job function and/or skills of people who are unemployed or changing jobs. The system then provides a listing of alternative occupations most closely related to those skills.

6. c. Referrals to the career/occupational center and MOIS may also be included at this point.

CLOSURE:

Ask for and respond to questions, concerns, feelings about the activity. Connect this activity to portions of the cover letter (page 72) and responding to interview questions, and emphasize its value when making a career shift.

AND/OR

Have each person in the group state one (new) transferable skill they identified in the session.

CHECKLIST OF STRENGTHS

Guide reference: page 12-13 Competency A 5, A 6

GOAL: To identify strengths and weaknesses and their application to the job hunt process.

STRENGTHS

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Personal strengths are qualities that we develop as we experience life. They are influenced by parents, family and other significant people as well as events, problems, and experiences that shape our attitudes. They include the rules we live by and how we cope.

Employers, in addition to evaluating an applicant's skills and abilities, also look at personality or personal strengths. They consider such attributes as punctuality, reliability, ability to work with others, capacity to think ahead, and endurance as job strengths. Therefore, it is important for job seekers to identify their own strengths, decide which ones would be an asset in a particular job and be able to communicate this information to the employer.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES:

1. Discuss with your group the concepts in the background information.

2. Lead a brainstorming activity - having your participants call out strengths they see in themselves and others. List them on blackboard or newsprint.

3. Have participants complete the Checklist of Strengths on pages 12-13 of their guide. Also have them add on a separate piece of paper any other strengths they have in addition to those on the checklist.

4. Have participants individually state to the rest of the group, "Two job strengths I have are_____and_____".

5. Model in front of the group the following activity: Have someone play the part of an interviewer and ask you the question "Why should I hire you for this job?" Respond for about 40 seconds talking about your job related strengths.

6. Have participants get into trios. Have them each take a turn responding to the same question, talking for 30 to 40 seconds about their own strengths. It will be helpful for you to time this activity, telling people when to start and stop.

7. Invite an employer to present to the group what strengths he or she looks for when hiring.

WEAKNESSES

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

In addition to strengths, it is also important for the successful job seeker to be aware of weaknesses. Everybody has at least one that may have some negative impact on getting employment. Weaknesses can be such things as not enough experience or schooling, difficulty getting along with others, or being consistently late.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES:

Go through a sequence of activities similar to those for strengths.

1. Define weaknesses.

2. Brainstorm possible weaknesses.

3. Have participants look at those items on the strengths checklist that they have marked "rarely". Have them identify those that could be considered a weakness in their type of work or as an overall employee. Ask them to write them down at the bottom of page 13.

4. Discuss strategies for dealing with weaknesses, including ways to improve them or minimize their impact on getting hired. Respond to participants' concerns regarding particular weaknesses they have identified. Give examples of how to improve or deal with these weaknesses.

5. Have them practice in trios responding to the question, "What is your major weakness" OR tell them they will have a chance to practice dealing with the weakness question when they practice interviewing later in the training.

6. Invite a past-participant to come into the group and discuss how these self-assessment activities help in the job search.

CLOSURE:

Remind participants that all of us have job-related strengths and weaknesses. It is important to identify strengths so that we can present ourselves more positively to employers. It is important to identify our weaknesses so that we can work on and improve them and learn how to deal with them when communicating with employers. You may want to use strengths activity 4 as a closure, especially if this is your last activity in the session.

YOUR JOB LIABILITIES

Guide reference: page 14 Competency A 7

GOAL: To realistically identify liabilities, decide which can be overcome, and develop an action plan for doing so.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Many people we have trained in employability skills have liabilities which either limit their occupational choices and/or have negative effects on their job hunt campaign. A liability is something disadvantageous such as a poor attendance record, a physical handicap, poor references or illiteracy. Some of them have needed help in identifying this liability and seeing clearly its effects. Other job hunters have been all too aware of their liability and, in fact, it looms so large it produces feelings of hopelessness and seriously limits their effectiveness. For those people, it is important to deal with the liability issue early in the training so that they can move past it and learn the rest of the job hunt skills.

It is important to recognize that for some, liabilities may be a sensitive issue. We suggest that trainers offer participants encouragement, information, support, and honesty.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES:

1. Explain the difference between weaknesses and liabilities - give examples from page 14 and from your own life and experience. In addition, you may choose some examples that are typical of the type of group you are working with. Some people may have been very vocal in the group already about a liability and you can use that as an example.

2. Promote a discussion of the idea of liabilities within the group by helping people personalize the information. You may want to use a particular individual's example and ask the group to help think of coping strategies or other options for him or her.

3. Provide a list of resources for additional help with specific liabilities. This may be a time for referral to counseling, further education, vocational rehabilitation, etc.

CLOSURE:

Stressing the confidentiality of the information in the job hunter's guide, suggest that participants jot down a job hunt liability. If they have an idea how to deal with it, ask them to write it down. If not, offer them the option of discussing this at a later time or that as the training continues they may think of one and can write it down then.

NOTE: Not everyone will have a liability so you may need to allow for that.

WHAT'S IMPORTANT TO YOU IN A JOB?

Guide reference: pages 16-17-18 Competency A 8

GOAL: To specify values and prioritize them.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Values are something unimportant to you - deeply held convictions and beliefs. When people's work violates their values they are usually unhappy. When work allows people to meet their values, they are more often satisfied and therefore more productive. Often, however, values are unexamined and assumptions are made as to what is important. Perhaps money is important to a parent, but the child does not share this value. Perhaps a person thinks he or she 'ought' to want to be a leader, but that is not really true. Often people have changed their values and have not up-dated their self image to their new beliefs. For all of these reasons, it is important to look again at values amd their connection to job choice.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES:

1. Discuss the importance of assessing values. You may wish to help participants define 'value'. Also tell them it is important to be really honest with themselves and think of their REAL values, not what they think they SHOULD value, or what their friends, parents, teachers, etc, value. It is also important to stress that we can't always achieve all of our values in work - we may, for examples, have to get recognition through community service, or variety through hobbies.

2. Have participants cut out the ten 'cards' on page 17 & 18 and follow the directions on page 16 to sort them into three piles - MOST IMPORTANT, OF MEDIUM IMPORTANCE, and LEAST IMPORTANT. Be strict about the numbers in each pile. This is a FORCED choice situation to make people prioritize their values. Have participants work alone on this activity so that they are not influenced by any one else's choices.

3. Have participants record their final sorting on the lines provided on page 16.

CLOSURE:

Ask participants to evaluate the job(s) they are considering to see if it fits in with their value structure. If it doesn't, they may need to reconsider the job, their values, or find ways to meet them in leisure activities.

INTERESTS - JOB SATISFACTION

Guide reference: page 19 Competency A 9

GOAL: To help participants define their interests and understand the relationship between interests and selecting job alternatives.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Often people who are underemployed, re-entering the job market, job hunting for the first time, unemployed or changing occupations will attempt to begin job-hunting before they have decided on a job target. In other words, they want or need to change but haven't decided what they want or can do. Helping people define their interests is part of that decision and helps the job hunter be more effective and efficient.

Interests are an important part of job satisfaction and sometimes are possible clues in turning a hobby or leisure time pursuit into a job or self-employment.

Listed in the participant guide on page 19 are interest inventories and computerized programs for identifying interests. If those are not available to you or your participants, the activities on pages 19 and 20 can be used.

(CAUTION: Sometimes interests cannot be realistically fitted into a work situation and will have to be left as leisure time pursuits.)

SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES:

1. Ask participants to think about what they currently really like to do. Activities can be those done at work or in leisure time. They can be physical such as sports or fitness activities, or social such as parties or committee work, or intellectual such as reading, going to movies, taking classes. Have them write down as many as they can think of.

2. Using your own list as an example, demonstrate how interests cluster and can be indicators of job satisfaction. For example, most of the things you like to do may involve people interaction and therefore you would probably find a "people" job more interesting. Or, perhaps many of them may involve working with your hands and that may be a component you might like to incorporate in a job. A second step is to then identify a job or groups of jobs that incorporate some of these interests.

3. Ask participants to notice interest "trends" or clusters in their own lists. Have a volunteer talk about one or two of his/her interest clusters and have group brainstorm possible jobs or job families that would include these interests. OR

   Ask about particular hobbies people have that might be turned into jobs - such as cooking, landscaping, gardening or childcare. Make the bridge, with the help of the group, from the hobby to the occupation.

4. Discuss ways that satisfaction of interests can be attained beyond the job. Participants need a realistic view about the degree of satisfaction which can be attained through employment.

CLOSURE:

Sum up this activity by asking for and responding to people's reactions, questions, and possible learning in doing this activity. Remind them of the link between interests and job satisfaction and things people like to do as clues to job-related interests.

N O T E S

LEARNING FROM YOUR PAST

Guide reference: page 20 Competency A 9

GOAL: To use past activities to define interests and connect those interests to possible job choices.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Looking at past activities can be an effective way of identifying interests which relate to present career decisions. Activities from high school or earlier are often particularly useful in this regard as they are usually freely chosen on the basis of liking rather than financial necessity or social or family responsibility. Helping people look at past activities is also often a way of freeing them up to think more openly about the future - being less constrained by the present.

Although this activity can be confrontive - people often ask themselves hard questions about their life's direction - it can also be reassuring in helping people realize that they do have interests and that these interests can be met in their job. It is also important to remind people that not all interests can be met "on the job". Some have to be satisfied during leisure time activities.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES:

1. Give some information on the relationship between past activities, and interests and careers. Then model the process by doing one or two examples from your own past - stating the activity, identifying the parts that were interesting or liked, then suggesting one or two jobs that match that interest. It is helpful to have at least one of the examples be an "every day" activity as in the guide.

2. Ask participants to list their own activities. Encourage people to do at least one from high school or earlier. Emphasize that these should be something they have liked or done well or had parts that they found interesting.

3. a. Ask for one person to share one of his/her activities and in front of the group help that person identify what he or she found interesting or liked about that activity. Then suggest jobs that include that interest.

   b. Have participants break into small groups of two or three and help each other work on one activity going through the same process.

4. Use a MOIS script to connect some interests to an occupational area.

CLOSURE:

Ask participants to list their own activities (preferably as homework) and fill in the second and third columns in the worksheet, page 20.

EMOTIONAL REACTIONS TO JOB LOSS

Guide reference: page 21 Competency A 1

GOAL: To understand the psychological impact of unemployment and job loss.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

The stages described on page 21 have been well researched and seem to be descriptive of an almost universal experience. The order and intensity of the components differ for many people, but the feelings are there. For most people, hearing them described provides a relief - there is recognition of the feelings, and relief that they are "normal" and there is an end to the tunnel. Although this is the first competency, and may, depending on your participants, be the first thing you discuss, it is placed in the guide a bit later on. The reason for this is that for many people some trust has to be developed before they are willing to discuss these feelings and some leaders may want to postpone this discussion. It was also deemed important to lead from strength - and allow people to begin to identify their abilities, etc., before looking at some of the more difficult issues.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITY:

Read each stage to participants. Add examples from your own experience if you have them and/or ask participants to share their experiences. Allow time for expression of feelings and be prepared for some strong feelings. One of the things which can happen in a workshop for the unemployed is that a lot of anger is displaced onto the leader. This activity may stir up some of that anger but helps it to be directed appropriately. Also be aware that people in your programs may be at any stage of the process. This may also be a place to be aware of referral resources for people who need more help that you can give in your program. You may want to provide participants with a resource list of community agencies/organizations that work with specific problem areas.

CLOSURE:

Have each participant identify where they think they are right now in regards to their feelings and identify one next step they can take to move towards resolution. For many, being in your program is that step.

STRESS - WHAT TO DO WHEN THERE IS TOO MUCH

Guide reference: page 22 Competency A 1

GOAL: To understand the psychological impact of unemployment and looking for work and to determine ways of coping with stress more effectively.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Being unemployed and having to look for work produces several stressors on an individual - reduced income, family tension, fear for the future, loss of identity. Many ways in which people attempt to cope - withdrawal, alcohol consumption or procrastination produce more stress. "Distress" often results in some physical reaction - such as stomach problems, headaches, reduced energy, sleeping too much or too little, back and neck problems. Happily, there are coping methods to reduce stress and the possibility of physical illness.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES:

Present the "Stress Spirals". Explain and demonstrate models (see next page for samples). Say that there are positive and negative ways of responding to a crisis or stressful event. Using loss of job as a stress-producing event, start in center of spiral and talk through both negative and positive stress spirals. You may use samples we have provided or develop your own, or begin each one and have participants help you fill in the pieces.

2. Have participants do the stress reducer checklist on page 22.

3. Go through items on the stress reducer checklist and talk about the role of each as a coping method. For example, exercise produces chemical changes in the body which decrease depression (a common reaction to loss) and increase energy. Or, taking care of health or dental problems make people feel better physically, and decreases worries. NOTE: Provide information to training participants about the low or no-cost medical/dental services in your geographical area.

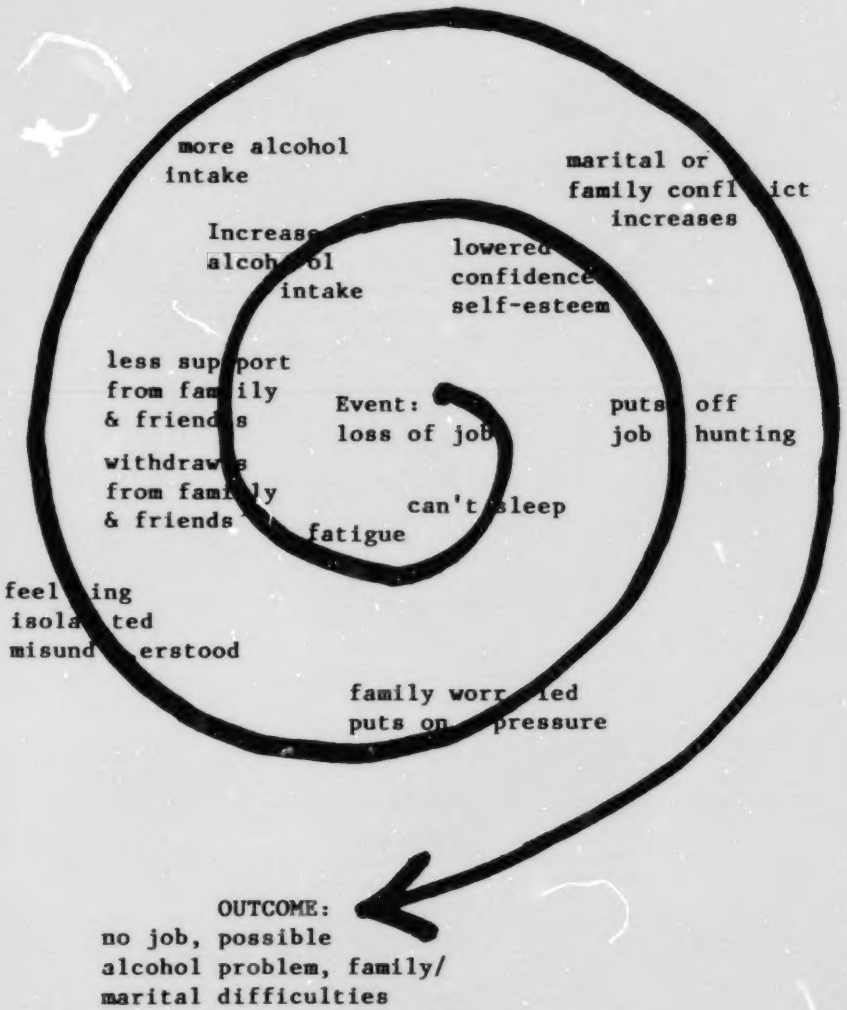
4. Be aware there may be people in your group who can check very few items and may feel overwhelmed by all the empty spaces or concerned about their stress level. Suggest that they can tackle only one item at a time, that most people will not be able to check all the items on the list, that there are some they can do immediately (such as eat at least one hot balanced meal a day or begin exercising) while others may take more time and be more difficult (like building a network of friends and acquaintances or cutting down on cigarette smoking).

CLOSURE:

Say again that stress is a natural response to job hunting and unemployment but that people have a choice as to which methods they use in coping with it. Ask each person to choose one stress reducing activity and make a commitment to begin acting on that activity.

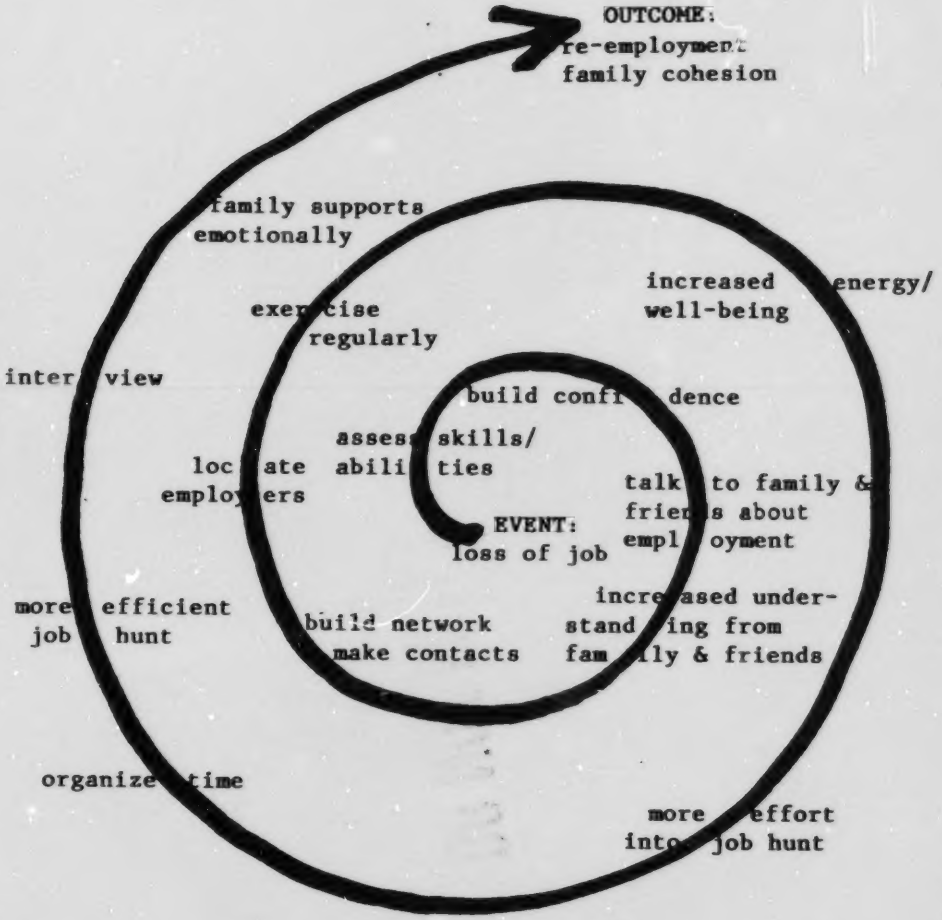
STRESS SPIRALS

Begin at the center of each spiral with the event and then add various pieces, moving out toward the end of the spiral and the outcome:


more alcohol intake
marital or family conflict increases
Increased alcohol intake
lowered confidence self-esteem
less support from family & friends
Event: loss of job
puts off job hunting
withdrawing from family & friends
can't sleep
fatigue
feeling isolated misunderstood
family worried puts on pressure
OUTCOME: no job, possible alcohol problem, family/ marital difficulties

38

NEGATIVE RESPONSE



POSITIVE RESPONSE

35

Most people usually can have one or more negative reactions to stress. These can consciously be replaced by more positive coping methods.

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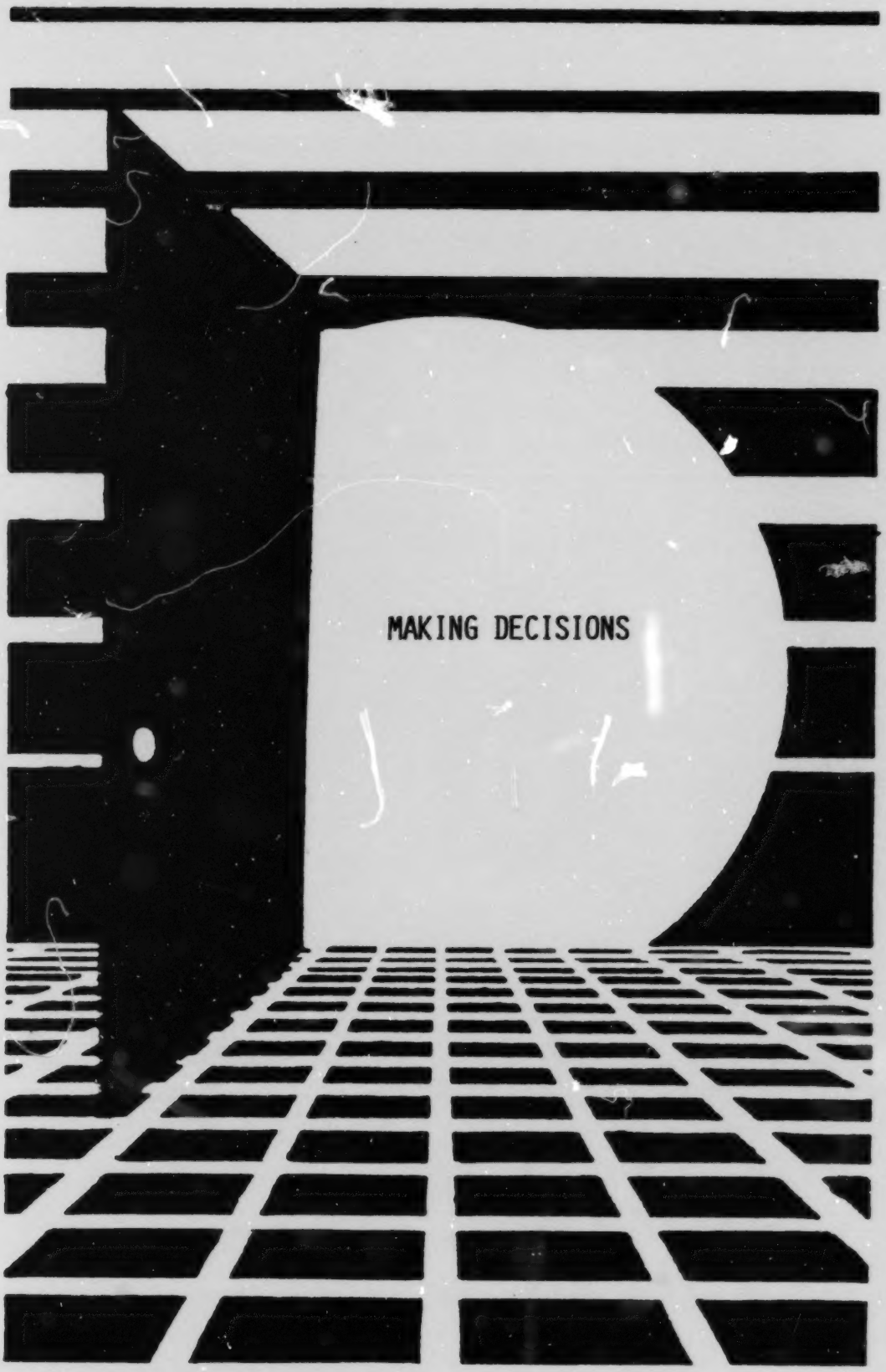

MAKING DECISIONS

THE FACTS OF LIFE

Guide reference: pages 27-28 Competency B 1

GOAL: To identify individual realities and practicalities as a part of making decisions.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

The job hunt often involves much more than just looking for and finding work. There may be numerous decisions to make. In making decisions there are important factors to consider - particularly the everyday realities that relate to one's own personal needs and/or situation. Some of the realities and practicalities that your participants may have to deal with are: child care arrangements, transportation, work clothing, benefits needed, money or programs for re-training or schooling. And these realities are important considerations for the job hunter.

In addition, employers have commented about people applying for work without considering -

1. Can they work the hours necessary?
2. Have they planned for child care?
3. Do they have transportation?

Employers consider it a weakness not to have thought about personal realities before applying and interviewing for the job - and tend not to hire these people.

Therefore, trainers should raise issues of personal realities and the impact these realities have on the participant's job hunt.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES:

1. Read through one of the sample situations from the Facts of Life activity sheet on pages 27-28 and lead a discussion about what Terry Smith should do and what else Terry should consider.

2. Then, have participants complete the Facts of Life activity sheet, including writing their own story (which can be done as homework).

CLOSURE:

Allow the group an opportunity to share their reactions to this activity via a class discussion. You may also want to use this with the decision making activity sheets on pages 32-33.

BARE-BONES BUDGET

Guide reference: page 29 Competency B 1

GOAL: To review monthly expenses and assist in assessing individual realities and practicalities.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Many people do not have a clear idea of their financial obligations. Youth entering the labor market often have an unrealistic idea of the "cost of living". People considering returning to school or changing careers may need to look again at their expenses. The unemployed clearly need to carefully examine their monetary needs. People receiving unemployment compensation or public assistance need to decide whether they can afford to work at a low paying job.

For all of these reasons, it is important to encourage people to look at their needs, consider possible cuts in expenses, or consider the long term possible benefits of short-term sacrifices.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES:

1. Model your own bare-bones budget or the budget of a hypothetical person typical of your population. Identify sample items that could be eliminated such as cable T.V., magazine subscriptions, fast-foods, etc., in order to distinguish between luxuries and necessities. They are often different for various individuals, depending on their values. Some individuals consider a morning newspaper a necessity while others would consider it a luxury. However, small items, when purchased frequently, add up when computed on a monthly basis. For example, a fifty cent cup of coffee, when purchased five days a week, adds up to ten dollars a month. A less expensive alternative would be to make it at home. Discuss other situations where there may be less expensive alternatives.

2. Have each participant do their own Bare-bones Budget activity sheet. (this might be best done as a homework assignment)

3. In small groups (3 or 4 persons) have participants brainstorm and list various items they can eliminate from their budget to reduce monthly expenses. Then, have them come up with a dollar value for these items as to reflect a total monthly savings. NOTE: This activity may not be appropriate for people whose budgets are so limited as to provide no choices.

CLOSURE:

Have each participant identify one next step they can take to have more control over their money management. Suggest that they keep in mind financial needs in the decision making exercise on page 32 where they evaluate a job possibility as well as when preparing for an interview.

THE SHORT TERM/LONG TERM GOAL CONNECTION

Guide reference: pages 30-31 Competency B 2

GOAL: To be able to set both short term and long term goals and to understand the possible connection between them.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Often people in employability skills training fall into two categories. There are those who haven't set any long term goals and have taken jobs that fit a variety of short term needs without leading to any overall plan. Also, there are those whose long term goals seem so unreachable to them they can't muster the effort to even take some of the interim steps that might get them there. Making the connection between short term and long term goals will help people in both situations.

The short/long term goal connection is a plan of action. It helps individuals in "checking out" the reality of reaching their goal(s). It is a one step at a time approach, and the idea is that each short term goal represents a step toward one's long term goal(s). The process in the guide illustrates this connection. (see explanation in participant guide, page 30)

SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES:

After reviewing background information:

1. Model a short/long term goal setting process that you personally have experienced. For example, your long term goal may have been to complete school. Indicate what short term steps (goals) helped you reach it (interim jobs to earn tuition, applying for financial aid, etc.). OR, your long term goal may have been your present job and you can indicate what steps or short term goals you set to get it.

2. Talk through the goal setting process in the guide on pages 30-31.

3. Ask for a participant to volunteer to work with his or her goal. In front of the group, have the participant state the goal. Clarify the goal if needed. Identify, with the help of the participant and the group, the intermediate steps to reaching tne goal.

4. Have all participants identify and write down a long term goal. (#1 on page 31) Then ask them to write down the steps they will need to take to reach that goal and fill in steps 2 and 3 on page 31. Provide individual help if necessary.

5. Have them fill out step 4 on page 31.

CLOSURE:

Have participants state orally one long term goal and one step they need to take to reach that goal.

DECISION MAKING EXERCISE

Guide reference: pages 32-33 Competency B 3

GOAL: To know appropriate decision making strategies for the job search.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

People have trouble making decisions when:

1. Their choices present a conflict in values (e.g. when ample leisure time and a high wage are equally important - often a job will provide one or the other but not both)

2. They don't have adequate information about their choices (like trying to decide between two occupations and having job outlook information for only one)

3. They have a great deal of information and have no structure to help them prioritize or organize it.

The Decision making exercise on pages 32 and 33 is designed to help people with this process.

When making a decision, whether it is personal or job related, considering all possible alternatives and other information related to that decision assists one in making an informed decision. The result is that individuals make a decision that they are comfortable with, and one that is appropriate to their situation. Therefore, to make effective decisions, people must consider:

1. What it is they want to achieve or accomplish,

2. What are their alternatives, and,

3. What are the advantages and disadvantages of each alternative.

By processing information in this manner, decision making becomes more organized, effective, and easier.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES:

1. Talk about effective and ineffective decision-making. Give examples and consequences of each.

   It can be useful here to introduce a bit of humor and discuss with personal examples, some of the ineffective models. (This also serves to help participants see their own ineffective strategies without "lecturing" or "preaching". Some ineffective decision making examples you may want to discuss are:

impulsive - e.g., buying a record just because you see it in the store.
fatalistic - e.g., I guess it was just fated for me to have a flat tire and miss the interview.
compliant - e.g., if you think I should take a vacation, I'll take one.
delaying - e.g., I'll think about that tomorrow when I'm less tired.
agonizing - e.g., let's see, I like pepperoni pizza, but green pepper is healthier; maybe I should get double cheese instead; on the other hand.....
intuitive - e.g., it feels right to move to the Andes, so I'll go.
paralyzed - e.g., I don't know where to start. I can't decide; I can't do anything; I'm really stuck.

2. Go through a decision of your own (use blackboard, overhead projector, etc.,) using as examples factors that you would consider if you were making a job choice. (use the decision making worksheet as a guide)

3. Have participants complete the decision making worksheet on page 33. (This may be done as homework.)

4. Talk about any success or difficulty they may be having and underscore reasons for each.

CLOSURE:

Have participants gather additional information, if needed, to complete the decision-making process on page 33. This also can be done as homework.

NOTES

WHAT ELSE COULD YOU DO?

Guide reference: page 34 Competency B 4

GOAL: To assess relocation, self-employment, civil service and military service as alternatives.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Many job hunters who have considered relocation find themselves without enough information to make a good decision. Stories have circulated about people relocating to sunbelt states and unhappily finding lower wages, higher living costs and few jobs that can utilize previous experience. These individuals have often returned home at much financial sacrifice. Gathering adequate information about a new location is essential to a successful transition.

Also many people have considered self-employment (the fastest growing segment of our current economy) but fail because they lack practical how-to information. Since so many small businesses fail, it is very important for people to have accurate information and get expert assistance with all that's needed to start and maintain a business. Military and civil service are often options that people overlook because no one has suggested to them these possibilities.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES:

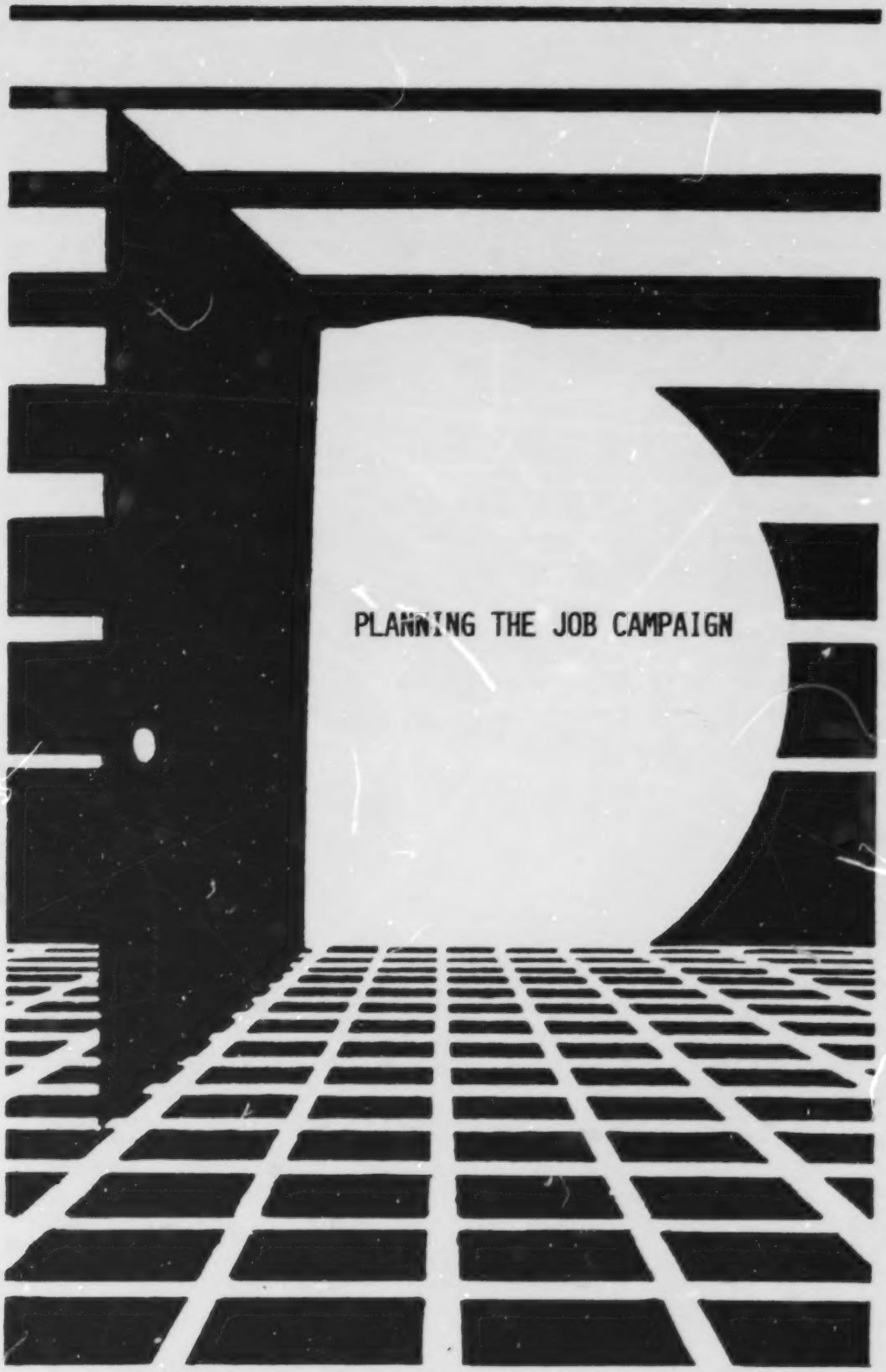
1. Raise people's awareness of these possibilities by talking briefly about each and providing sources for information-gathering.

2. There may be other options not listed in the guide that your group may think of and want to know more about. Arrange for speakers to come and talk to the group about any of these options if group is interested. In addition to contacting Federal Job Information Centers, the local Small Business Administration and representatives from the military for speakers, contact someone who has started a small business or relocated to talk to the group and provide first-hand information.

3. Form small special interest groups of participants who are interested in a particular option to do a "group project" to find out about this alternative. A further activity can be to have these individuals present their information to the total job hunt group. See information interviews page 44 in Opening Doors guide for help. Resource Relocation Guide, designed as a document for use with youth, may be provided as an independent use instrument.

CLOSURE:

Tell participants that these activities have multiple purposes; to raise options they may not have considered, to provide experience in gathering information, to also expand their creative thinking beyond these four alternatives to other possibilities for employment.


PLANNING THE JOB CAMPAIGN

BUILDING AN INFORMATION NETWORK

Guide reference: pages 37-40 Competency C 3

GOAL: Know how to establish, expand, and use an information network.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

A high percentage of people find jobs as a result of their friends, relatives, and other personal contacts. In fact, studies indicate that only 20% of all job openings are advertised. In view of this, job seekers need to use more effective resources, such as an information network, in order to help them locate and secure employment.

Typically, people have their own information network, and use it everyday, without even knowing it. So, the information network is not really something new. But, if used effectively and systematically, it can reach a large number of people, many of whom may know of several job opportunities and may also be willing to offer you their help (you never know who you may reach).

Consider this statement: "They were lucky, they got the job because they knew somebody." Well, that may be true, and maybe it was luck. But, networking is one way of organizing that luck!

SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES:

Review background information and explain what networking is, why they need to do it, and how they can get started (refer to pages 37-40 in Opening Doors). Then:

1. Give participants an opportunity to use each other as contacts by trying out the network process.

   A. Model this first by having a participant from the group come up and share his or her job target or career goals. Then, have the group respond by offering their input as to the various people and/or organizations he/she might contact. Specific names and phone numbers of contacts are often exchanged in the process. (while doing this, have a member of the class keep notes for the volunteer)

   B. Then, divide class into groups and have each member of the group in turn share his or her job target or career goals and receive input from all members of that group.

2. Have class complete network list on pages 38-39. Have them begin a record keeping system like that on page 40 or those on page 50. (may be given as a homework assignment)

CLOSURE:

Reemphasize the rewards of networking. Then, have each member of the group complete the following statement: I plan to begin my networking by_____

YOUR PERSONAL SUPPORT SYSTEM

Guide reference: page 41 Competency C 3

GOAL: Know how to analyze, establish, expand and use a support network.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

From John Donne, "No man is an island," to the Beatles, "I get by with a little help from my friends," there has been recognition that we all need the support of others. We need this support particularly in times of transition - like job hunting. People who have lost their jobs have probably also lost many of their usual supports. For many people, asking for help is seen as a sign of weakness. It is really important to help them see getting support as a sign of strength and help them know how to ask for help. This may be particularly difficult for men and for women who pride themselves on their independence. Sometimes reminding people of how they would feel if a good friend didn't ask them for help when they needed it, can help overcome this obstacle. It may also help to remind them how good they feel when they have an opportunity to be of service to others, and how much of that they have done in the past. Now it may be their turn to be on the receiving end. They have been on the giving end before and will be again. It all balances out. This is sometimes called cosmic accounting.

The list of supports in Opening Doors have been gathered from research on typical supports people need.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES:*

1. Discuss the concepts outlined above. Have people respond with how it is for them to ask for and receive assistance from others.

2. Go through the worksheet on page 41 giving examples from your own life. You may use real names of people or institutions or, if you prefer, you may use categories like neighbors, fellow church members, teachers, etc.

3. Have participants do their own sheet, being as specific as possible. Encourage them to think of blank or weak areas positively - that they now know where they need to add support and can now make plans to do so.

4. Have participants discuss their support systems in groups of three, or in a total group if it is 12 or fewer people. The important part is to make sure everyone has a chance to discuss his or her feelings about this.

5. You may want to have people each offer one support to someone or everyone in the group, e.g., I can help you get to the library, or, I can be called at home if you need a shoulder to cry on or an ear to boast to.

*It is important that this activity not be the last thing you do with an individual or a group. It can arouse strong feelings, and it is important for people to have a chance to come back and talk about them.

CLOSURE:

Have each person tell the group one support they have OR have each person make a commitment to an action step for enhancing her or her support system, OR activity 4, above, can be used as a closure.

N O T E S

LOCATING EMPLOYERS

Guide reference: pages 42-43 Competency C 4

GOAL: To be able to locate employers who hire in one's chosen occupational area.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Labor market information indicates that approximately 20% of all job openings are advertised through the newspaper want-ads and public and private employment agencies. For those who rely upon newspaper want-ads as their source of employment information, this is an unfortunate fact.

In addition, there are other disadvantages in relying upon want-ads. Job openings advertised in this way tend to have large numbers of applicants, increasing the competition. They often do not allow one the time and/or opportunity to learn more about the job prior to applying for it, and turn much of the control of the entire situation over to the employer. Another disadvantage is that it does not lead a job seeker into the internal or "hidden" job market.

Participants need to consider that there are other ways in which to locate employers and/or employment opportunities. Using alternate methods allows individuals a greater degree of control in their job search. In other words, individuals decide the type of organization they prefer, the location (in some cases), and the type of job they want. They can also tap the "hidden job market" i.e. job information that is circulated only <u>within</u> an organization or network.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES:

1. Review with group the background information and the percentages listed on page 35 of their guide.

2. In groups, have participants brainstorm traditional and non-traditional sources for locating employers. For example, a traditional source may be the Yellow Pages in the telephone book while a non-traditional source might be a party or soft ball team chatter. The possibilities are endless. During the brainstorm activity, one person from each group needs to keep a list in order to record each source and/or idea.

3. Then, have each group report their results (one at a time). Begin by having one of the groups read their results while the you list them on a chalkboard (or whatever is available). In consideration of time, have remaining groups add only new sources or ideas to the list.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES (continued)

4. Bring in yellow pages, business directories, etc. Resource people from the community, may be brought in to talk about how to locate employers, or field trips to resources such as the library may be taken.

5. Have participants review and complete Locating Employers activity sheet. (page 43 Opening Doors) This may be done as homework or in the training if resources are available.

CLOSURE:

Re-emphasize that locating and contacting employers is something that individuals can do themselves as opposed to relying or the newspaper want-ads. Participants need to consider how they will adjust and adapt this approach to their own personal job campaign. Ask each person to make an agreement to identify 10 potential employers before the next session. Refer participants to networking, pages 37-40.

A second step can be to have participants then contact the employers on their lists - after they have had training in telephone techniques, cover letters and resume writing.

N O T E S

INFORMATION INTERVIEW

Guide reference: pages 44-45 Competency C 6

GOAL: To be able to obtain and conduct an information interview.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Information interviewing is particularly useful for people who are changing occupations (by choice or necessity) and those who are entering the job market after an extended absence (re-entry women or displaced homemakers) or for the first time (youth & adult).

It has many advantages. It gives people a push into a new or different work environment in a less-threatening (than a job interview) situation. It can provide first-hand realistic information not available otherwise about a particular job, or more generally, ideas where background and skills may fit in a new occupation. Furthermore, it provides a new contact and an opportunity to expand one's network by asking for names of others to talk to. It is very important to keep this activity "honest" - not to use it as a smoke screen to ask for a job.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES:

1. Using background information above, introduce concept and make a distinction between the information interview and the job interview. Be pursuasive about advantages of this kind of information gathering, giving examples of people who have done them with positive outcomes.

2. Assign the interview, giving participants a time limit to complete one. They can go by themselves or with a few other people who have similar interests in a particular job or company/organization. You should discuss people's reluctance to ask for an interview, and their concept that people will be unwilling or too busy to talk to them. It has been our experience that most people who are asked to talk about their work or organization for a short time are eager to do so. (Most people like to talk about themselves). They often spend more time with the job seeker than they had planned.

3. You may need to help people plan calls and practice what to say. This can be done in small groups, even rehearsing the contact.

4. As people have completed information interviews, it is encouraging to others to have them briefly report to the whole group what the experience was like and one piece of information they got that was useful to them.

CLOSURE:

It is important to help people sift through information gained in this way. How does the job fit with their employment needs? Are there opportunities to be hired? How can the information be used to prepare for an interview, write a letter, or complete a job application? How do their abilities fit the job requirements, the organizations' needs?

WHY DO I WANT THIS JOB?

Guide reference: pages 46-47 Competency C 7

GOAL: To have knowledge of information relevant to the identified area(s) of work.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Imagine spending time in training or schooling only to discover, upon completion, that you really do not like that area of work OR, imagine spending six months job hunting, taking a job that doesn't fit your needs and having to job hunt again in a short time. For many, this is an unfortunate reality and perhaps one that could have been avoided if the necessary information had been gathered regarding that area of work before the investment of considerable time or money.

The preventive approach to this requires getting the facts regarding a particular area of work using a variety of resources to do so. The main benefit of this preventive approach is job satisfaction. Having a realistic image of a particular occupation, understanding the job content and requirements, knowing about availability and growth potential, all contribute to establishing a positive job hunt and work experience.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES:

1. Discuss the reasons for getting information about a particular work area, using background information and the introduction on page 46.

2. On a separate piece of paper, have participants respond to the questions on pages 46-47 in Opening Doors using their current or last job as an example. Discuss ways of gathering information and have participants brainstorm what information they need to have to evaluate a job possibility.

3. Arrange a field trip to a public or college library, college or high school career center, to investigate available resource materials, e.g., M.O.I.S. microfiche/computer, M.O.D.A.S., Occupational Outlook Handbook, and other relevant information. Stress the information interview as another way of gathering the data they need.

4. Have participants select three (3) jobs that they are currently interested in and respond to the questions on pages 46-47. (encourage participants to use resource materials listed on page 47.

CLOSURE:

Have participants practice responding to the question, "Why do you want this job?" Suggest that they review other sections in the users guide that may be related to this activity. These include "What's Important To You In a Job", "Interests = Job Satisfaction", "Researching An Organization and Position".

IS IT LUCK OR BEING CREATIVE?

Guide reference: pages 48-49 Competency C 8

GOAL: To define alternative ways of gaining needed experience and training and to know non-formal aspects of the job search.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

In a competitive job market, using creative approaches to finding work can increase a person's chances to get employment. Volunteering, moonlighting, making the rounds, finding an internship or apprenticeship, and using an interim job as a stepping stone are ways that some people have found opportunities.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES:

1. Have participants read examples (can be a home work assignment) from the participant guide OR talk through these examples or others from your own experience in which people have used creative ways to find work. The examples in the participant guide are actual stories we have collected in our work with job-seekers.

2. There may be "different" ways in which participants (or their friends, relatives, acquaintances) have found work. Ask them to tell about these to the rest of the group.

3. Ask for a volunteer to state his/her goal for employment. Help group "brainstorm" creative ways that person could use to reach that goal. Stress that this is not the time to judge or evaluate suggestions - that the purpose of the activity is to list possibilities no matter how strange or outlandish they may sound. Put items on blackboard or newsprint. At the conclusion, have volunteer write down the three "best" suggestions, in his/her opinion, on page 49 of the participant guide. This activity can be repeated once more with a second person if time is available.

4. Have a community resource person speak to the group about her/his creative way of finding a job.

CLOSURE:

Have group one at a time finish sentence: One way I could try to reach my goal is_____

KEEPING TRACK OF JOB HUNT INFORMATION

Guide reference: page 50 Competency C 9

GOAL: To set up and maintain a record keeping system.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

When conducting a job hunt, individuals can easily lose track of the contacts they have made, the many organizations to which they have applied, and also of the outcome and/or follow-up that they need to do. Using a record-keeping system helps people organize their job hunt. The record-keeping system does not need to be elaborate. In fact, simple is better. The key is to develop a system that works for the job hunter.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES:

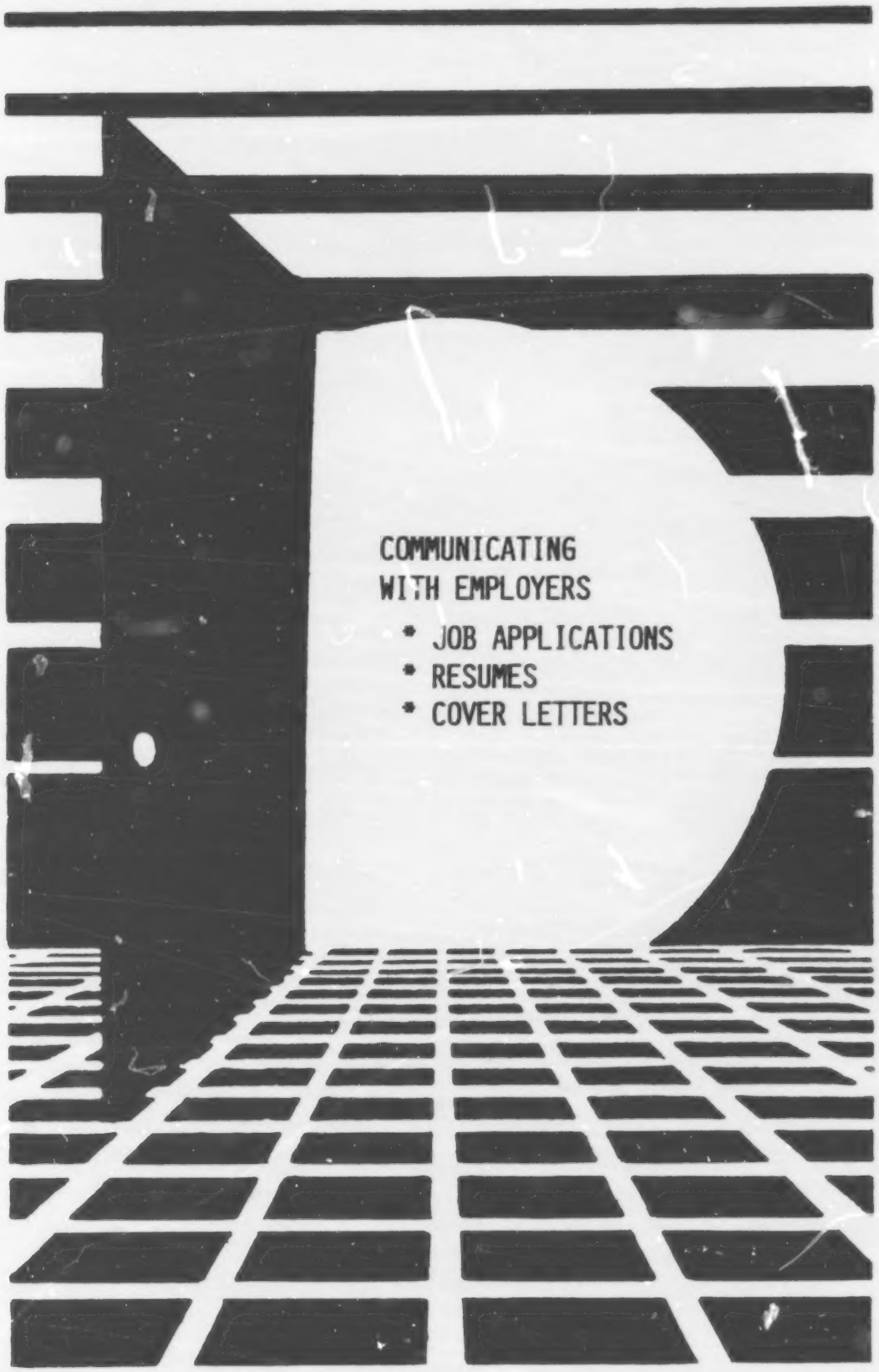
1. Present some hypothetical situations which illustrate how information can get lost without a system.

2. Review the examples on page 50 of the participant's guide. Lead a discussion of how participants think they might organize their own job hunt information.

3. Ask participants to develop their own record-keeping system. (Can be done as homework). Stress that they use a format they think will work for them. Also refer to the networking information sample on page 40.

CLOSURE:

Have one or two participants show and talk about the systems they developed.


COMMUNICATING
WITH EMPLOYERS
* JOB APPLICATIONS
* RESUMES
* COVER LETTERS

ASSERTIVENESS TECHNIQUES

Guide reference: page 53 Competency D 1a

GOAL: To be able to identify assertive behavior and communication and to use it in various phases of the job hunt.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Being assertive is an important part of many phases of the job hunt. In fact, a person who takes a passive approach to job hunting will be missing many opportunities to find work because he or she will be reluctant to do the information gathering, cold contact telephoning, networking or persistent follow-up. Aggressive people who approach people in a hostile or manipulating way will also create difficulty for themselves when seeking work.

It is assertive to decide to go after what you want and to use various communication techniques to do so. It is also assertive to present oneself in the most favorable light.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES:

1. Describe the circumstances on page 53 of the participant guide. Read each response and ask participants for their reactions as if they were the interviewer. Highlight the negative aspects of the passive and aggressive responses and their consequences. Also comment on the parts of the assertive response that make it effective.

2. Define Passive, Assertive and Aggressive behavior using examples from your own experience that relate to the job hunt.

3. Lead a discussion about how participants see these ideas relating to their job hunt.

CLOSURE:

Throughout the employability skills training, point out and reinforce assertive approaches to the job hunt. Help people in practicing telephone techniques, interviewing, and follow-up to develop assertive communication.

TELEPHONE TECHNIQUES

Guide reference: pages 54-57 Competency D 1b

GOAL: To be able to gather information and market oneself using the telephone.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

The telephone is a tool often used by employers and job seekers alike. Job hunters find it useful for getting information about possible openings, asking for interviews or appointments, expanding their information network and marketing themselves to employers. There are certain techniques that make using the telephone more effective.

For employers it is often a time saver. They will do pre-interview screening to cut down on the number of people they see in person. Job seekers who call an employer to respond to a newspaper ad or who have filled out an application or sent a resume may find themselves being interviewed over the telephone. They will do better if they are prepared.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES:

1. Talk through the background information filling in with examples from your own experience with the uses of the telephone.

2. Tell participants about the three points on page 54 of Opening Doors: GNAP, Polite Persistence and Setting a Goal.

3. Have participants read the sample telephone conversations included in the guide before the training session OR have volunteers read the samples playing the parts (job hunter & employer). Ask participants what they noticed about the conversations. Did they follow the three points above. What did they learn from them?

4. Have participants get into trios - one person making the call, the other receiving the call, and an observer to help with feedback. Tell them to practice making a call for whatever purpose they select - responding to an ad, making a cold contact to an employer, requesting an information interview, or asking someone to help them network. Ask them to look for the "three points" as well as work on reaching the goal for the call. Each person has a turn playing each of the three roles. It can be especially effective to simulate the telephone situation by having participants sit back to back.

5. If you have telephones available, have participants make actual calls while in your program. (cf. Azrin & Besalel, 1980)

6. Use volunteer employers to role play telephone calls with participants.

CLOSURE:

Go around the group and have people complete the sentence: One thing I want to remember when I use the telephone to find work is_____

INFORMATION ABOUT YOU

Guide reference: pages 58-59 Competency D 2a

GOAL: To compile a personal data inventory including previous work experience, education/training history, military and community service activities.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

A personal data inventory is an organized collection of specific details about one's employment and educational history. It may also include additional information such as volunteer experience, military service, and complete information regarding personal references.

A personal data inventory is among those steps one needs to take when in the beginning stages of the job hunt. It is extremely useful when filling out job applications, or in preparing a resume. With a personal data inventory, information is organized, easily available, and complete. Also, spelling can be "checked out" to insure that it is correct. Filling out job applications is greatly simplified and improved. Resume preparation is helped.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES:

1. Discuss the importance of this activity as described above.

2. Following the example on pages 58-59 in the users guide, have participants begin their own personal data inventory. In view of the limited space in the guide, we suggest that participants use additional paper in order to complete this activity. (may be given as a homework assignment) Remind them that some of sections may not apply to them and they can leave these blank.

CLOSURE:

It is often not easy to collect all of this information. Emphasize its importance and encourage participants to do the task. You may want to ask them to bring it back to a later session. This will increase chances of their doing it and provide an opportunity for supportive feedback. Suggest that they take their completed information sheets with them each time they fill out a job application.

THE JOB APPLICATION

Guide reference: pages 61-64 Competency D 2b

GOAL: To be able to complete a job application correctly.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Employers often make hiring decisions based on the job application. It is therefore important that one completes the job application correctly. This means NEATLY, COMPLETELY, and FOLLOWING DIRECTIONS accurately.

* Neatness indicates to an employer that this individual is well organized and has a sense of self pride.

* Being complete demonstrates that one follows-through with work, "gets the job done", and pays attention to details.

* Finally, employers prefer individuals who listen to and follow directions in order to "do the job right".

The key to filling out job applications is preparation. This includes having a completed personal data inventory (see Information About You on pages 58-59 in Opening Doors) and extra pencils and pens handy (dark blue or black ink).

NOTE: We have provided examples of applications that have been completed by hand as opposed to being typed because in many cases individuals will not have the opportunity to use a typewriter. However, we suggest that individuals consider typing whenever appropriate or possible.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES:

1. Have participants look at pages 61-62 of their guide. Tell them there are many mistakes in this application. Ask them to point them out (for some groups it may be necessary to do this line by line). As they point out the mistakes, comment on how to do it "right". You may want to have them refer to the "better" application on pages 63-64 as you go along.

2. Summarize the background information from the employer's point of view.

3. Obtain job applications from various organizations in your area that would be similar or representative of the kind of application this group might typically fill out and have each participant complete one. OR Have participants obtain their own job applications and complete them. The M.E.S.C. also has standard applications available for use.

CLOSURE:

Encourage participants to prepare themselves by gathering all relevant job application information, i.e. to complete "Information About You", pages 58-59.

WRITING YOUR RESUME

Guide reference: pages 65-71 Competency D 2c

GOAL: Learn the what, why, and how of a perfect resume

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Styles of resumes accepted by both the public and private sector have changed greatly over the past few years. Most people and even many authors of the resume writing books do not know the new styles. Some of the changes have taken place as a result of legal rulings; others as a result of changes in the preferences of the workplace. The net result is that most people need help in preparing an up-to-date, effective resume.

A resume is often the first impression a job seeker gives to a potential employer. It is therefore crucial that it be the best possible impression. People do "judge books by their covers." It has been said that resumes are only used to eliminate people. If that is true, it is even more important that a resume provide no reason for being put in the "out" file, and as many reasons as possible for being put in the "call for an interview" file.

For all of the above reasons, writing a resume often causes a great deal of anxiety in job seekers. The high stakes, the strangeness of the format, and the challenge of a difficult job, all increase the sense of panic at even beginning. The pages in the guide provide a step by step process for accomplishing this task. It is very important for the trainer to be supportive and gently encouraging.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES:

1. Have participants read page 65. Elaborate each point in the what and why sections. Have others add from their experience. Discuss each of the points in the how section giving reasons for each aspect:

   Perfectly Resumes must be prepared perfectly because employers assume that is the kind of employee one will be. A messy resume gives the impression, also, that the applicant didn't really care enough about the job to take care. It implies poor organization and lack of attention to detail.

   Length One page is best because most employers are very busy and often have other work to perform besides hiring. In today's market they may have several hundred resumes to sift through. (They will not usually look past a first page.)

   Paper Most organizations are very conservative. They want employees who know how to follow the rules. Although some "creative-type" jobs might be approached with an off-beat resume, a bright color or another creative presentation, most employers prefer the standard white or off-white. Good quality paper and matching envelopes again imply a careful, conscientious person who really wants the job.

(see over)

Layout Here is your chance to be appropriately creative. Look at many layouts and find one or two which appeal to you and try those first. Trainers should have as many samples as possible to provide inspiration. White space is an important component of layout. Consider how and when to use capitals, underlining, dark type, indentation, centering, skipped lines, etc.

Type Style Remember how busy employers are. They do not want to strain to read italic or light type. Again, stick to the simple. Sell yourself through skills not cuteness.

Duplication Duplication can be done inexpensively at a duplicating service. Library or post office copies do not look good. Type setting can be nice but is NOT a necessity. Computer type should be avoided unless it is "letter quality". Make enough copies for current use but not so many that you will hesitate to change your resume.

Format It is important to emphasize that most recent data goes first, that is REVERSE CHRONOLOGICAL ORDER. Describe each format and discuss the "pros" and "cons" of each as described on page 65. Encourage participants to try different formats to determine which works best for them.

2. Have participants read the rest of the resume section - through page 67. You may want to discuss each point to make sure it is clear.

3. Look at the three sample resumes in the guide and discuss why each was useful for the person described. Try to provide more sample resumes for people to look at - particularly ones which relate to the background and experience of your participants. For example, youth just entering the job market may want to include high school courses, vocational competencies, student activities, honors, etc. It can be very useful to have poor examples also to highlight errors or weak points. A good way to present sample resumes to groups is to make transparencies and show both good and poor examples with an overhead projector.

4. Have participants follow the eight (8) step process. You may want to have them do each step for homework. Some groups or individuals may need to do steps 2-7 with your help. Pages 66-67 of Opening Doors provide a list of sections to be included in a typical resume. Encourage people to use the words provided on page 71. Many people need help in finding an objective. (If a person has great difficulty with an objective, it may be because they are not clear about their goals. In this case you may want to go back to the self assessment (First steps) and decision making portions of the guide.

CLOSURE:

After participants have written a resume, you may want to have them bring them in to get your input or that of the group before the final draft is finished and then duplicated. If the group will be giving input, you can ask them to respond to these statements:

1) What I like about this resume is.....
2) What I would like to see changed is.....

INTRODUCING....THE COVER LETTER

Guide reference: pages 72-73 Competency D 2d

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

The cover letter, or sales letter as they are sometimes called, can be much more than the traditional, "Enclosed please find...." The information on page 72 of Opening Doors should provide you and your participants with an explanation of what a cover letter is and the reasons for using one. It is important to highlight the relationship between researching a position and the ability to write a good cover letter. All employers want an employee who will help them do what they have to do - the cover letter should indicate how the applicant will be able to do that; special skills, strengths, training, awards, etc. Although cover letters may be prepared in a basic format, an individual needs to tailor each cover letter to each position. They should be typed separately for each position and sent with or without a resume as fits the circumstances.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES:

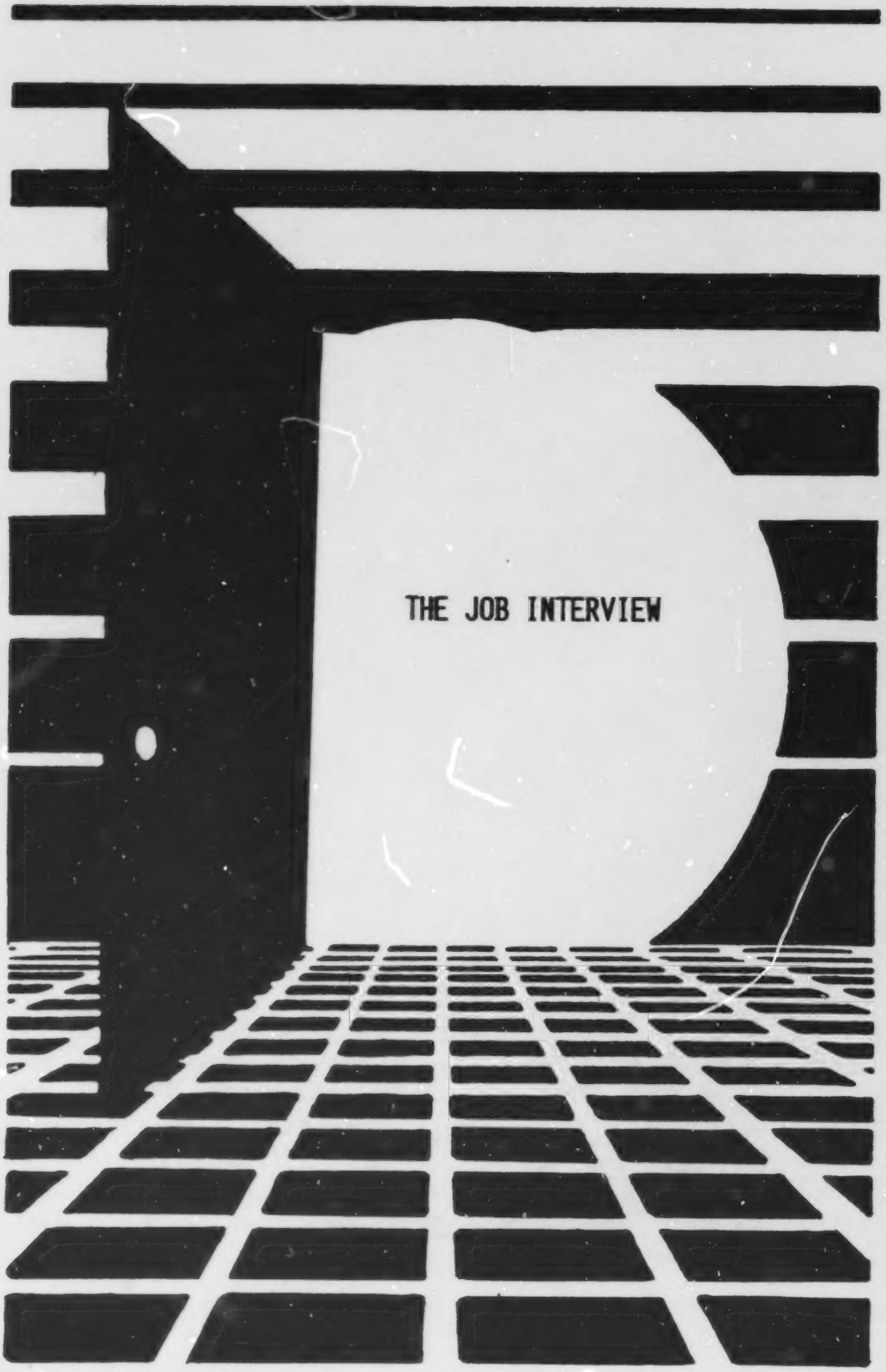
1. Using the model in the participant's guide for reference, have each person write a cover letter for a real or model position.

2. Have class critique each others' letters or leader critique each.

3. Have each person rewrite letter.

CLOSURE:

Remind participants that they need to research a position in order to write an effective cover letter. Have them save their samples to modify as needs demand.


THE JOB INTERVIEW

THE INTERVIEW

INTRODUCTION TO THE SECTION

The interview is where many of the preceding parts of this guide are put to use - especially assessing one's skills, strengths, weaknesses, and liabilities plus the how-to's of gathering information and approaching employers. Often the success of the interview is in direct proportion to the amount of planning and preparation that the applicant does before he or she crosses the threshold for the interview.

How to interview effectively is a learnable skill. An athlete preparing for an important competition practices whatever skills and strategies are necessary to win. Likewise a job-seeker must use every bit of competitive edge he or she has to "win" the job by interviewing well. The following parts of this guide are the learnable skills that employers have agreed can make the difference between a rejection or a job offer.

Throughout interviewing, training should be as experiential as possible. Rehearsal, role-plays, interview simulations, use of video-tape if possible - with opportunities for individual and/or group feedback built in - are some of the suggested activities for interview training. People learn much more from experiencing even a simulated situation than they do just hearing or reading information. We realize that trainers will have different time sequences for employability skills training - some may have to cover interviewing in an hour or two, others may have one or two days. Depending on your situation you may want to emphasize some parts of this section more than others or change the sequences to fit your style, environment, or the needs of your participants.

If you are fortunate enough to have video-tape equipment to use, we recommend taping two interviews, with each individual - one before they have any interview training and one after. Seeing the amount of improvement after the training is a confidence raiser and helps build in successful experiences for the participants. Also, before you do any formal video-taping, it is helpful to de-sensitize your participants to the camera and seeing themselves on the television monitor. To do this, set camera to photograph participants at some point before interview practice begins. Have them say a few words and then re-play it for them to see themselves.

We recommend using a panel of employers to talk about what they do in an interview and how they evaluate job candidates (why they hire or don't hire). Having such a panel speak to a group about mid-point in the interview training provides "real-life" authoritative reinforcement for the trainer's presentations and also allows job seekers to see and hear interviewers as "real" people like themselves.

THE INTERVIEW - WHAT TO EXPECT

Guide reference: pages 77-79 Competency E 1

GOAL: To know the stages of an interview and the appropriate time to ask questions regarding pay and fringe benefits. To be able to utilize appropriate closing and follow-up techniques.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Most people who haven't been actively interviewing find comfort in knowing that most interviews follow a fairly predictable pattern - certain stages or steps. Talk through the various stages (1-5) with your participants so they have some idea of what to expect and what's appropriate to do and say at what stage. As you do this, there are important points to emphasize:

A. In the beginning stages of the interview it is wrong to ask the "what do I get" questions. These are better saved until a job offer is made.

B. Many people think of an interview as a passive experience - "I go in, get asked questions, answer the questions, the employer decides whether I get the job." More effectively, a job hunter needs to take a more active part.
   - First of all, it is important to emphasize that interviewing is a two-way street - that an applicant also can decide whether this is the right job with the right organization. Unless applicants are desperate and must take any job, taking the wrong job often results in dissatisfaction, poor performance and having to find another job within a few weeks or months. It is better to evaluate this possibility based on what they need or prefer, and what they can do.
   - Secondly, emphasize the turning point (step 3). In this stage, interviewees have many choices, options, and can often salvage something if the interviewer decides they aren't right for the job.

C. Follow-up. In our experience in training job hunters, one of the parts that most people don't do enough of is follow-up. They don't call back, or write an after-the-interview letter, or check back again after a few weeks or months. Employers tell us when they receive a follow-up letter they take another look at the applicant. They also say that follow-up indicates to them that the person is very interested in the job/organization, that he or she is willing to do more than the average.

D. Evaluating and improving interview skills. Emphasize that a fifth interview will be better than the first (a tenth better than the fifth) because people tend to improve with experience. We all have at some time in our lives interviewed poorly. (You may want to share a bad experience of your own at this point and what you learned from it.) If interviewing is a learning experience, then the most important thing we can take from an unsuccessful interview is how we can do better next time, what we want to do or say differently.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES:

1. As you talk through all the various stages on pages 77-79, encourage participants to add experiences they may have had, to react or ask questions about what you are presenting. Another option to introduce the stages (if you have some participants with interview experience) is to ask the group about what has happened first, next, then last in their interviews as a way to involve them in the presentation of this information.

2. The Hook Concept: (page 78) Explain the purpose of this as a closing technique. Put participants in the situation by saying.... "You sense the interview is coming to a close, now is the time to use the hook, you say...." Have them write down their version of the hook and practice saying it to another person in the group.

3. Go through the sample follow-up letters on page 94 of the guide. Respond to questions, concerns. Have group members write their own version of a follow-up letter. If people in the class or group are actively interviewing, have them write actual letters and share with the class before they are mailed.

CLOSURE:

Emphasize the connection between planning, preparation and a successful interview, that interviewing is an active rather than a passive process. To wrap up this part, you can ask participants to state orally one thing they want to remember about what they learned in this session.

N O T E S

INTERVIEWING DO'S AND DON'T'S

Guide reference: pages 80-81 Competency E 1-11

GOAL: To know appropriate and inappropriate interview behaviors.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

This list serves as an overview of a variety of interviewing concepts - many of which are expanded upon in other parts of this section and some of which are mentioned here only. There is particular emphasis on the etiquette associated with effective interviewing and being in the interview environment.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES:

1. As an introduction to do's and don't's, divide a chalkboard or newsprint in half and have the group tell you and then list on the board the do's and don't's they already know or can think of.

2. Fill in with selected items from pages 80-81 that haven't been mentioned and which you want to highlight. It is important to give examples to explain why a particular do/don't is listed. For example. "Do treat secretaries and receptionists politely - they are important allies." As "gate-keepers" these staff people often decide whose phone calls are put through or which follow-up letters are called to the interviewer's attention. They are frequently asked for input regarding an applicant's behavior while waiting to be interviewed. It is not in the applicant's best interest to offend them.

3. Show video-taped or filmed situations which show positive and negative interview behaviors.

CLOSURE:

Respond to questions or comments people have so far. Ask them to read the whole list at home and come back with questions or reactions for the next session.

PRACTICING INTERVIEW QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Guide reference: pages 82 -83 Competency E 2, E 4

GOAL: To know how to rehearse answers to both typical and problematic interview questions. To experience getting and giving feedback on all parts of interviewing skills.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Role playing or practicing interviews is designed to be the final activity at the end of the interview training. It is at this point that participants can put into practice and fine tune all the concepts they have learned so far - body language, preparation, appropriate clothing, researching an organization, making clear-cut statements, etc.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES:

1. It might be useful to have participants look over the questions and requests for information on pages 82-83 before the group meets to be familiar with the kinds of questions interviewers often ask.

2. Ask members to write on page 83 their own "difficult" questions they want to practice further.

3. With a co-trainer or participant playing the part of an interviewer, play the part of a job applicant and role-play a <u>poor</u> interview. Ask the group to watch and give feedback at the end on the following items:

Verbal behavior	Non-verbal behavior
Is applicant prepared:	Eye-contact
All answers clear cut, complete?	Posture/body position
	Facial expressions
Does applicant ask questions?	Mannerisms/nervous habits
Are diction and pronunciation good?	Voice level (too soft or loud)

Note: when selecting questions to be asked, keep in mind that most job hunters have concerns about the following kinds a) global questions like "tell me about yourself?", b) illegal questions having to do with health, age, family responsibilities, c) questions about pay expectations, and d) questions about strengths and weaknesses.

4. After the role-play is finished, begin by asking the group if they would hire you for the job. If you have done a poor interview they will probably say no and you can then respond by asking, "Why not?" It's important to help them be as specific as possible because while

(see over)

they're learning what's important in a job interview, they're also learning how to give behavioral feedback to you and eventually to each other. For example, if someone says "You looked like you were very nervous," you respond with "What was I doing that showed you that?" That helps the person focus on the mumbling, tapping foot or crossed arms.

5. After getting feedback and answering the questions this role-play will undoubtedly stimulate, role-play the same interview again, using the same questions. This time do an improved version. Again ask them to give you feedback.

6. With video-tape equipment. If you have this equipment, use it to tape individuals in your group practicing interviews. Have person select 4 - 5 questions he or she would like to practice and give that information to the interviewer as well as information about the kind of job they are applying for. Tape a five to seven minute interview. Then play it back to critique with the whole group, stopping the tape at appropriate intervals so that you and other group members can comment on interview content. NOTE: To build confidence and self-esteem, it is important to emphasize comments on what the practice interviewee is doing right as well as what he/she needs to improve. After the critique, ask the person to summarize what she/he has heard.

7. Without video-tape equipment. Ask for people to volunteer to role-play an interview in front of the group using the same process as above. Instruct the group to watch and pick one thing the applicant did well and one thing he/she might need to improve. After the interview is over, provide feedback avoiding needless repetition. "Does anyone have anything new to add?" Again emphasize the positive elements as well as including what needs to be improved and have applicants summarize feedback information they received.

8. To provide the role-play experience for all participants, have group divide into trios. Each person will rotate roles and have an opportunity to be interviewer, interviewee and observer. Role play interviews using the same process as above in which the "interviewee" gets feedback from the other two members of the trio. This is a time when having extra staff people to help coach and give feedback is useful.

CLOSURE:

1. Emphasize the value of preparing and practicing before an interview. Suggest ways they can continue to practice at home or when the training is over.

2. Have each person state one interviewing strength they have.

ILLEGAL QUESTIONS

Guide reference: page 84 Competency E 5

GOAL: To know legal rights in interview situation.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

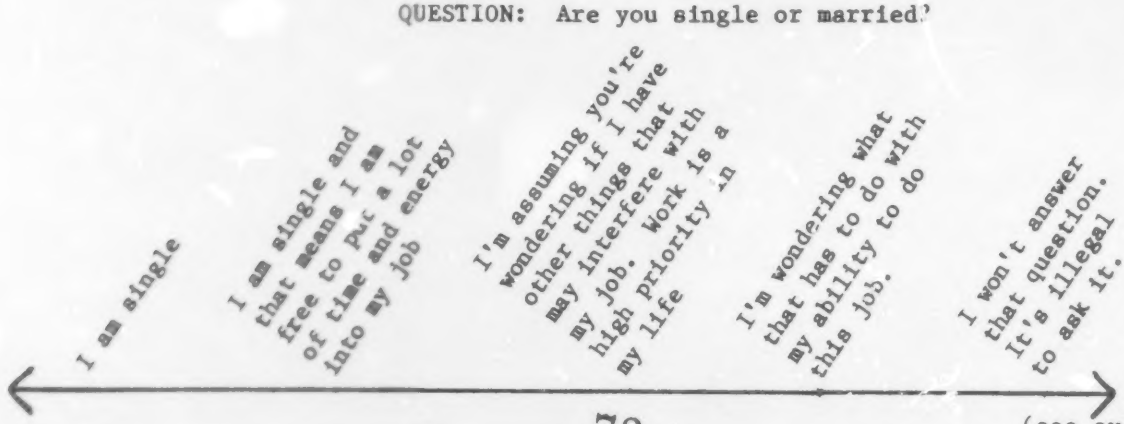
It is important for job hunters to know what they legally can and can't be asked in an interview. Even today when many employers are aware of the legal consequences of appearing to discriminate when hiring, there still are many employers who are unaware of the guidelines or ignore them. In dealing with job hunters over many years, we have heard of illegal and offensive questions being asked and applicants feeling at a loss as to how to respond. Therefore, it is important to know what questions are "illegal" and to have a practiced repertoire of responses.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES:

1. As a warm up, ask group if they can tell you some of the areas that are illegal or if they have been asked a question they think may have been illegal. As people come up with categories, you may want to list them. As people give examples, you can categorize and then list those also. After group has run out of examples, talk through those that haven't already been mentioned (See page 84 of Opening Doors). There are three (age, arrest record, and health) that have rather subtle distinctions that you may have to clarify.

2. Often people think they have only two choices when asked an illegal question - to answer it or to refuse. Answering a distasteful question may leave applicants feeling uncomfortable and compromised. Refusing to answer can jeopardize their chances of being offered the job.

   To help people realize they have other options, draw a long horizontal line on chalkboard or newsprint. Choose an illegal question to work with (it can be one which your participants seem to be most concerned about). Place a straight answer on the far left of the line, place a refusal on the far right. It can provide a bit of humor here to brainstorm some of the rude things they might like to say, e.g. "you stupid fool, you can't ask me that." Then write in two to four optional responses in between the two extremes. See example below:


QUESTION: Are you single or married?
I am single
I am single and that means I am free to put a lot of time and energy into my job
I'm assuming you're single and wondering if I have other things that may interfere with my job. Work is a high priority in my life
I'm wondering what that has to do with my ability to do this job.
I won't answer that question. It's illegal to ask it.

(see over)

3. Have people get together in pairs, select an illegal question they would like to practice responding to and practice by having their partner ask them the questions and responding in a variety of ways. Often people have questions from previous interviews that they want to practice answering differently.

CLOSURE:

Remind people that when you get to role-playing actual interview situations they will have another opportunity to respond to illegal questions. Another alternative is to have them each share the response they liked the best with the rest of the group.

N O T E S

QUESTIONS TO ASK THE INTERVIEWER

Guide reference: page 85 Competency E 6

GOAL: To know what kinds of questions to ask in an interview and when to ask them.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Often job hunters don't think about an interview as a two way decision-making process. Therefore, they don't think about what they need to know to evaluate the job or employer. Consequently, when asked if they have any questions, they often say no or ask something that may not be to their advantage.

Job hunters sometimes think they should not clarify an interviewer question or statement and will plunge on and answer a question they don't understand. They may also take a job without understanding what an employer has said about job security or job content and then be disappointed when the job turns out to be different from what they thought.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES:

1. Talk through the information on page 85 of the guide with your group highlighting when it is appropriate to deal with money or the "what do I get" topics.

2. Brainstorm with the group lists of questions that they could ask in an interview - some of them will be very individual, based on each person's personal priorities.

3. When doing practice interviewing, be sure people practice asking questions or clarifying what the interviewer is saying. Give feedback on the content and delivery of their questions.

CLOSURE:

Have individuals fill out the bottom of page 85 regarding questions they want to ask in a job interview.

RESEARCHING AN ORGANIZATION AND POSITION

Guide reference: page 86 Competency E 6

GOAL: To know how to find information regarding the job and hiring organization and use in preparing for an interview.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Researching the position and organization is one of the areas in the job hunt that provides the applicant with an edge over other people competing to be hired. When interviewing employers prior to writing this guide, we found that employers are impressed when someone takes the time to find out something about what the job requires and what the organization's needs and problems are. Conversely, many employers said they would hesitate to hire someone who really didn't know why they wanted to work for that company and how they fit the job requirements.

This is another one of those "doing more than the average person" activities that we have mentioned elsewhere in this guide.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES:

1. To introduce this material, slowly set the stage by asking participants to think about themselves in an interview situation; sitting in the office, looking at the interviewer, answering questions about themselves. Tell them the interviewer is now asking "Why should we hire you to do this job?" Have them think of how they would answer that question. Slowly move on to another question that the interviewer is asking, "Why do you want to work for this organization?" Again, ask them to think how they would answer that question. When you think they have formulated a possible answer, move to the third and final question. Tell them the interviewer is now asking them "Do you have any questions about the job or this company?" Have them think about one or two questions that they can ask.

2. Ask them what that experience was like. "Was it hard or easy to respond to those questions?" "What made it hard/easy?" As you process the fantasy experience, highlight that in some instances knowing something about the job/organization would have helped.

3. Brainstorm with them various ways they might go about getting this type of information. Add input of your own gained from your experience as well as sources listed on pages 42 and 86 of Opening Doors.

CLOSURE:

Go around the group or class and have them complete the sentence: One way I can get information is _____.

CLEAR CUT FACTS AND CONVINCING STATEMENTS

Guide reference: page 87 Competency E 2

GOAL: To be able to present abilities, experience, strengths to an interviewer in a convincing way.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

In the job hunting skills training we have done, we've discovered that interviewees sometimes don't do a good job of convincing an employer they can do the job, especially if the prospective job is somewhat different from their previous experience. Being specific about skills, abilities, previous job tasks and personal strengths is a way of convincing an employer that the applicant can do a new job.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES:

1. Make a general self-descriptive statement. Then follow with a similar statement which is more specific. See examples on page 87 to use as a guide. Ask participants in your group to put themselves in the place of the interviewer and decide which statement told them more about you. Ask them to then identify the difference between the two statements.

2. Present the material on page 87 using examples of general and more factual statements from the guide or using some examples from your own experience.

3. Have one or two people volunteer general self-descriptive statements and with the help of others in your group or class clarify the statement and make it more convincing.

CLOSURE:

1. Ask participant to write down a general statement on the bottom of page 87 that describes them and then write one that is more factual and specific.

2. When doing practice interviewing, include this concept in the feedback they get about how they describe themselves.

WHAT SHALL I WEAR TO THE INTERVIEW?

Guide reference: page 88 Competency E 7

GOAL: To know appropriate dress and grooming for an interview.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

First impressions are important when interviewing. Research shows that the first 30 seconds are critical in creating this impression. It takes a lot of talking to counteract a negative first impression. Like it or not, unfair as it may be, employers judge an applicant by what he or she looks like and sometimes will decide not to hire before that person has time to say anything. When competing for a job, it's important to do as many things "right" as possible. Dress and grooming is one of those areas that people with awareness and information can do "right".

SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES:

1. Talk about the importance of personal appearance using background information above and on page 88.

2. If you are having a panel of employers talk to your group or class, ask them to also speak about the subject of dress and grooming.

3. The last part of interview training (we recommend) should be a chance for each participant to do a simulated practice interview with or without the use of video tape. For that session you can ask people to wear their interview "outfit". While giving feedback on interview behavior (verbal content and body language), include feedback about dress and grooming.

   NOTE: Sometimes others (including trainers) are reluctant to give a person feedback on "sensitive" issues like offensive body odor or bad breath. However, it has been our experience that this kind of information, caringly given, can make a difference in a person's chances to get hired. Often, when people see themselves on a video replay, they will identify improvements they need to make (a haircut, clothes that fit better) without the trainer or other group members having to say anything.

4. There are resource people such as image consultants in the community who may be willing to talk to a group about appropriate interview clothing for a particular job and speak about how to put together an interview outfit even with a limited budget.

CLOSURE:

Have participants turn to page 92 in the job hunt guide, the Personal Appearance Checklist, and jot down or check off what they will wear to an interview and what grooming items they want to particularly remember.

YOUR BODY LANGUAGE CAN WORK FOR YOU

Guide reference: page 89 Competency E 8

GOAL: To be able to use effective body language in an interview.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Body signals make up a large percentage of our communication. What we do with our bodies (a lifted eyebrow, a tapping foot, downcast eyes) often speaks much louder than the words we utter. The fact is, people can be trained to use body language to create a favorable impression in an interview.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES:

1. As an introduction to this concept, set up an interview situation with you the trainer playing the part of the applicant. Give a participant or co-trainer a list of five questions to ask you. Respond to these questions verbally, while using ineffective body signals (slouching, looking at the floor, mumbling occasionally, looking at your watch, chewing gum). Ask group or class whether they would hire you. Clarify what they're saying in terms of what they say you do. They may say, "You didn't seem very confident" or "You weren't paying attention". Ask them "What did I do that showed that"?

2. Comment on the effective body language behaviors listed in this section as you get feedback on your performance.

3. Repeat the simulated interview with the same five questions, using more effective body signals. Ask them for feedback on what you did this time.

4. When you have participants do the interview practice as the final outcome of interview training, be sure to give feedback (and ask other group or class members to do this also) on individuals' body signals. Be sure to include what they're doing right as well as what they need to improve.

CLOSURE:

Have each person write on the bottom of page 89 in the job hunt guide the body cues they want to improve.

DEVELOPING AN INTERVIEW PLAN and PERSONAL APPEARANCE CHECKLIST

Guide reference: pages 90-93 Competency E 9

GOAL: To know how to develop an interview plan and apply it in an actual interview.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

The success of an interview performance is almost always in direct proportion to the amount of preparation a job candidate does beforehand. (Includes getting information, practicing, thinking about, planning.)

There are always some things that come up unexpectedly in any interview so that the more planning one does, the fewer surprises one will have to deal with when anxiety levels are already running high.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES:

Pages 90, 91, 92 and 93 in the guide can be used in two different ways:

1. a. Give a few anecdotes/examples from your own or other's experience where planning ahead for an interview would have made a difference.

   b. Emphasize that interviewing is something people learn, that a fifth interview will be better than a first; and that they can evaluate their mistakes and improve their skill by doing the self-evaluation part on page 93.

   c. Give participants extra copies of pages 90-93 and suggest they fill these out before an interview.

2. A second option or way to use this worksheet is at the beginning of the training session for interviewing. Tell participants to imagine they have a job interview the following day, give them copies of pages 90-93 and ask them to fill out the worksheet up to the middle of page 93. Then ask them what difficulties they may have had in doing so. Unless they are already skillful interviewees, they will probably have some blank spaces which you can use to highlight the need for getting information about the job and organization, matching skills and experience to the job, planning what to wear, thinking about financial needs, and other techniques and ideas you will then be exposing them to as you continue interview training.

CLOSURE:

Suggest that whenever they have an interview that they use this planning worksheet to help them get ready for it.

THE INTERVIEW FOLLOW-UP LETTER

Guide reference: page 94 Competency D 2d, E 11

GOAL: To be able to write an interview follow-up letter.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

The reason that there are so many job hunt competencies included in this training package is that in order to be a competitive job hunter it is necessary to do more than the "average". Writing interview follow-up letters is an example of doing something extra to call attention to oneself and one's desire to have this job or be employed by a particular organization.

Employers tell us that when they receive a letter after the interview they will re-consider the applicant - taking a second look at the resume, application or interview notes for this person. Sometimes it makes a significant impact on the decision to hire this applicant.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES:

1. Talk about reasons for writing a follow-up letter as explained above. Note: Our experience has been that it is better to avoid using the term "thank you" letter as it puts a social connotation to what should be a business letter.

2. Stress that the follow-up letter be in proper business format, including name of interviewer, name and address of organization, date, signature, etc.

3. Review with group or class the middle paragraphs of the samples and explain the benefits of stressing one's abilities and interest in the job and organization.

CLOSURE:

Have participants write, in their own words, their version of a follow-up letter they can send after an interview.

"UPS AND DOWNS" OF THE JOB HUNT

Guide reference: pages 95-96 Competency A 1

GOAL: To know that the job hunt is a series of ups and downs. To be prepared to cope with rejection and still keep moving forward in the job hunt.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Since job hunting typically involves considerable time, effort, and determination, participants need to understand the various stages and prepare for some of the inevitable disappointments. This may be accomplished, in part, by offering an awareness of the various "ups and downs" of the job hunt and pointing out that most people experience this cycle and that they are not alone.

NOTE: Be sensitive to the possibility that some participants may find it difficult, or be unwilling to accept this information. Many unemployed people, especially long term unemployed, may see the trainer as an EMPLOYED individual who does not relate to, understand, or share experience regarding their situation. If this is the case, it may help to talk about a job hunt experience of your own and some of the disappointments you experienced.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES:

1. Talk about some ups and downs you have experienced in your job searches. And/or have a newly employed resource person come in and talk about their hopes and disappointments in their recent job hunt. Select someone your participants can relate to.

2. Get a discussion going in which participants can share their experiences - their own ups and downs. Ask them what they did (or are doing) to cope with the frustrations and still continue to job hunt. If what they are doing to cope is not effective, what else could they do? Make reference to their support systems and stress management techniques. (pages 22, 41)

   Note: It is important to include some problem-solving and action steps so that the discussion doesn't just include "Isn't it awful" content. Also talk about the "putting all your eggs in one basket" concept at the top of page 96.

CLOSURE:

Ask each participant to state one thing they could do to help them cope with the "downs" of the job hunt.

OPENING THE DOOR
TO YOUR FUTURE
* KEEPING YOUR JOB
* NEXT STEPS

KEEPING THE JOB AFTER YOU GET IT

Guide reference: pages 99-100 Competency F 1-5

GOAL: To learn the behaviors necessary to keep a job.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

While some individuals may be good at finding jobs, they are not always good at keeping them. This problem can be examined from two perspectives: 1) the things an employee must do when starting a job, and 2) those things that are required of an employee to order to keep the job. In our interviewing of employers before writing this guide, four basic areas they all said were crucial to keeping a job were: reliability, punctuality, quality and quantity of work. Asking questions, being aware of employer expectations, developing good relationships with co-workers, and knowing how the job fits the overall operations are also keys to doing well in a new job.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES:

Review background information then:

1. In small groups, have participants brainstorm and compile a list of do's and don't's in reference to starting the job and keeping the job. Ask them to think of what they have done or others they know have done to keep or lose a job.

2. Have each group report out while trainer lists on blackboard.

3. Talk about the concepts on pages 99-100, stressing those that may not have been mentioned in the brainstorm activity. Talk about how employers evaluate people (both informally and formally) and highlight ways participants can evaluate themselves and behave in a performance evaluation.

4. As an individual homework assignment, have each participant do an evaluation of themselves, as an employee, in the following four areas: 1) reliability, 2) punctuality, 3) quality, and 4) quantity. Use page 100 in the users guide as a reference. Be sure to list both strengths and weaknesses. Be honest. (Trainer may need to assure participants that this information will be considered confidential)

CLOSURE:

Have each participant complete the following statement (either in writing or orally): One of the things that I learned about myself as an employee is____ _____

MAKING PLANS FOR YOUR FUTURE

Guide reference: page 101 Competency F 6

GOAL: To know how to gather information and make decisions regarding one's occupational future.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

In the past, it was typical of people to choose a career and stay with it up to their retirement. In today's labor market, this is not the case. Studies indicate that on the average, people will change careers at least five times throughout their working life.

In view of this, it may not be to one's benefit to rely upon and be restricted to one job. This means that people need to remain informed regarding various job trends, opportunities, and other such factors that influence their employment.

Therefore, it would seem to make good sense to develop other job alternatives. If labor market studies are any indication of things to come, it would appear that "making plans for the future" will be the ultimate form of job security.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES:

1. Do a mini-lecture highlighting background information and information on page 101 in Opening Doors.

2. Conduct a class discussion responding to the following situation:

   Suppose you heard rumors that your current job could be ending one year from now. What would you do first? After that, what would you do? What information would you need? What could be a back-up plan for you?

CLOSURE:

Have participants complete the following statement: The one thing I learned about planning for the future is _____.

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